

191
INSURANCE
CLAIMS
PAID.

PEARSON'S

TO INTEREST,
TO ELEVATE, TO AMUSE.

WEEKLY.

P.W.
COUPON

Jan. 6, 1894.

No. 181.]

TRANSMISSION AT
BOOK RATES.

WEEK ENDING JANUARY 6, 1894.

ENTERED AT
STATIONERS' HALL.

[PRICE ONE PENNY.]

Dr. Ridge's Food

FOR INFANTS AND INVALIDS.

Gives health, strength, and comfort to old and young, and quiet nights to mothers and nurses. Satisfying, Strengthening, Soothing, Agreeable, Digestible, and Nourishing. Dr. RIDGE'S Patent Cooked FOOD is the OLDEST, BEST, and MOST WIDELY KNOWN and has THE LARGEST SALE IN THE WORLD.

SOLD EVERYWHERE. CAUTION.—Refuse all Imitations. Send for Pamphlet on the "Management of Children." Post Free from Ridge's Royal Food Mills, London, N.



WONDERFUL VELVETEEN

Ladies are invited to write for PATTERNS, which will be sent POST FREE. Ladies pay carriage on all orders.

In Black and all the most Beautiful Colours now worn. Fast Fills. Fast Dyes. Every Inch Guaranteed. If a Dress should wear badly or be in any respect faulty, Lewis will Give a New Dress for Nothing at all, and pay the Full Cost for making and trimming. This quality is sold by the best drapers at 3/6, 4/6, & 5/6 yard, but Lewis's manufacture this Velveteen themselves and sell it direct to the public at 2/- a yard.

2/- A YARD.

DRESS MATERIALS—WONDERFUL in Value, Style, Beauty, & Variety. Ladies, write for the New Patterns. Please mention Pearson's Weekly, and address—

LEWIS'S, IN MARKET ST., MANCHESTER.

A SIGNAL SUCCESS.

"'Tis not in mortals to command success, but we'll do more, Sempronius, we'll deserve it."

THE PEARSON POTTERY CO., HANLEY.

Are selling fast the most wonderful Package of Crockery in the World. 100 Pieces for £1 1s. 0d.

A beautiful Dinner Service of 50 pieces is guaranteed worth the Guinea alone, consequently a charming China Tea Service and a useful Collection of Crockery are given FOR NOTHING. Thousands sold all over the world. Everybody not only satisfied but amazed at the quantity and quality given.

The Secret of the Success—The Pearson Pottery Company are manufacturers, not middlemen like many other advertisers. The Pearson Pottery have nearly 2,000 ft. frontage to the town of Hanley. Hundreds of packages will be applied for at the last moment for New Year Gifts. These should be applied for NOW.

The Thirty Shilling Bazaar Parcel is selling well. Apply at once. Send a Post Card for Particulars. You will never regret it. Freedom from breakage guaranteed. All letters to the

PEARSON POTTERY COMPANY, HANLEY.



BEETHAM'S Glycerine & Cucumber

FOR PRESERVING AND BEAUTIFYING THE SKIN AND COMPLEXION.

Preserves the Skin from the effects of FROST, COLD WINDS, HARD WATER, and INFERIOR SOAPS. Removes and Prevents all ROUGHNESS, REDNESS, CHAPS, IRRITATION, &c., and KEEPS THE SKIN SOFT and BLOOMING in all Weathers. Beware of Imitations, many of which are poisonous. Be sure to ask for "BEETHAM'S," which is perfectly harmless, and the only genuine. Bottles, 1/- and 2/6, of all Chemists, Perfumers, &c.; either size post free for 5d. extra from the Sole Makers, M. BEETHAM and SON, Chemists, Cheltenham.

2/11 ALL DRAUGHTS PREVENTED BY USING OUR 2/11 AUTOMATIC BRASS DOOR RODS. Complete, with Ends, Rings, and Brackets, finished in the highest possible manner. Any length up to 60 inches only 2/11 each. Carriage paid, 6d. extra.

Heavy Curtains to fit above Rods, in various Handsome New Materials, ready for use, from 2/6 per Curtain. Patterns free.

2/11 THE PORTIÈRE DOOR ROD COMPANY, 11, HIGH STREET, HIGH WYCOMBE. 2/11

Advertisements should be sent to "Pearson's Weekly" Advertisement Department, Sell's, 167, Fleet Street, London, E.C. General Offices: Henrietta Street, London, W.C.



Sold only in 1-ounce packets, and 2, 4, 8-ounce, and 1-lb. Tins, which keep the Tobacco in fine smoking condition. ASK AT ALL TOBACCO SELLERS, STORES, ETC., AND TAKE NO OTHER.

SMOKERS ARE CAUTIONED AGAINST IMITATIONS.

The Genuine bears the Trade Mark, "Nottingham Castle," on every Packet and Tin. PLAYER'S NAVY CUT CIGARETTES in packets containing 12, and boxes of 24, 50, and 100.

The following extract from the "REVIEW OF REVIEWS," Nov. 1893, is of interest to every smoker:—
THE PIPE IN THE WORKHOUSE.—The picture drawn by our Helper of the poor old man in the workhouse, puffing away at an empty pipe, has touched the hearts of some of our correspondents. One who dates from the High Alps, and signs himself "Old Scotch," says:—
I have been smelt with your suggestion in the October number of the "Review of Reviews" for a scheme to supply smokers in union workhouses with tobacco. I am afraid, judged by the ordinary standards, I am the least selfish of mortals, so I never give a cent except for purposes of so-called charity; but this scheme of yours appeals at once to the sympathies of a hardened and irreducible smoker. Were I in London, I would at once start a collecting-box for the fund, and levy contributions for it on my smoking acquaintances; but, unfortunately, my business compels me to be a wanderer round the Continent for the next nine months. I can, however, do a little, and would like to contribute a pound of what I consider the BEST SMOKING TOBACCO, viz., "PLAYER'S NAVY CUT" (this is not an advertisement), I enclose, therefore, a cheque for the amount.

The new Song of the Shirt.

Oh men with sisters dear!
Oh men with mothers and wives!
If you'll buy MILWARDS' NEEDLES
They'll bless you all their lives.



MILWARDS' NEEDLE-CASES.

Sample Packet, Wonderful Calyx-eyed, thread without threading. 3d. Post Free from Works, Washford Mills, Redditch.

PLUMTREE'S HOME-POTTED MEATS



Delicate in Flavour, Superior in Quality.

For the Breakfast, Luncheon, Tea, and Supper Table.

Of all Grocers, &c. Or send 7½d. or 1/3 for sample jar to maker,

PLUMTREE, Southport.

If we succeed in pleasing you, will you reward us by handing this copy to someone when you have finished with it?

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WAKENED FROM A DREAM.

It ain't belfy to wake little boys up so quick;
Dey forgets w'ere dey is w'en you do,
'Cause deys sand in deir eyes, an' the winkers will stick,
An' their thinkers is tangled up, too!
An' de p'ace w'ere dey cuddles in bed is so wom,
An' the pillers so comfy an' sof,
An' I don't fink it's wight for nobody to come,
An' des pull all de comforters off!

An' my pants won't come on; an' the woter's mos' fwoze;
An' the fowels all starochy an' slick;
An' de off-cloff's so cold 'at it fweezes my toes;
It's enought to make little boys sick!
An' you des' might a-leff me alone for a w'ile,
Till you heard dat dere bekfuss bell wing;
'Cause I des' was curled up in de comfiest pile,
An' dweamed in a dweam it was spwing!

Dey was cwocusses bloomin' along by de walks,
Punchin' little round holes in de leaves
W'ere dey comed pokin' frew on der little gween stalks,
Like a little boy's han's frew his sleeves.
Honey-bees was a buzzin' aroun' everyw'ere;
An' de peach-t'ee was all over pink;
An' it smiled des' so sof' an' so sweet in de air,
'At I des' was too happy to fink!

An' de little w'ite clouds des' went floatin' along;
An' dey was so pitty an' still
I could hear someone way off a-singin' a song,
An' the cow-bells clink up on de hill.
An' de little brook twickled over de stone,
An' de bubbles went dancin' down stweam!
An' den—you forgetted to le' me alone;
An' it all was des' on'y a dweam!

NOT QUITE A SUCCESS.

THE girls of a certain village had seen a picture of a life-saving fire corps organised by the young ladies of a neighbouring town, and decided to form a similar brigade. The drill consisted in getting round a large blanket and holding it to catch unfortunates who should jump from the second or third storeys of burning dwellings.

But the fair members of the corps wanted some real practice. After much persuasion, a young man, deeply enamoured of one of the members, was prevailed upon to fall into the blanket from the top of the barn.

The life-savers gathered one afternoon, attired in becoming uniform, and twelve gathered round the blanket and took a firm hold. Then the accommodating young man climbed up on the roof of the building, made ready, and jumped.

Each girl was gazing upwards, and at the terrible sight of a man falling through the air they were all so shocked that, without thinking, twenty-four hands went up to as many eyes to shut out the view.

The brave young man is still confined to his room.

KISSING IN THE NEW YEAR.

AMONG the lower classes in France a curious custom still exists—that of people not related kissing each other as the Old Year goes out and the New Year comes in.

Unmarried women of the working classes think it unlucky not to be kissed by one of the opposite sex on the very opening of the New Year; and when they are no longer in the heyday of youth, they generally arrange to give the *concierge* of the house in which they live a franc or two to come up and wish them *la bonne année* as the clock strikes twelve on the night of the 31st of December.

In the provinces the rule about kissing is inflexible; and any lady who withheld her cheek from the salute of any acquaintance or dependent, however humble, whether man or woman, who wished her *la bonne année*, would not only make an enemy, but be set down as having a bad heart.

In Paris people are less sentimental, and a pecuniary return for the expression of good wishes adequately meets the requirements of the case, without the kiss being enacted.

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UNSYMPATHETIC VIRTUES.

WHEN the present Czar became engaged to a Princess of Denmark, a member of the Danish diplomatic service was sent to St. Petersburg with the symbolical presents usual on such an occasion—namely, two modest hampers, one containing a honey-comb and the other a dog, the one to represent sweetness and the other fidelity.

On the way, however, while the diplomatist was asleep, a terrible drama took place. The contents of one of the baskets contrived to get close to the other basket, open it, and relieve it of what it contained. On awaking, the unfortunate diplomatist discovered that the honey had disappeared. Fidelity had gobbled up Sweetness. Happily, however, this event did not prove symbolical of disaster.

INEFFECTUAL.

IN country places where amusement is not abundant and people depend upon each other for diversion, neighbourly familiarity naturally flourishes, and the habit of "running in" to visit friends may be carried to an unpleasant excess.

A family living in North Bucks, found it something of a strain upon their ideas of hospitality to be obliged every day to entertain a tedious woman of seventy. The favourite book or the necessary piece of work had to be put aside, in order to shout bits of conversation in her ear.

At last the father in desperation planned to go into a sudden fit of temper in the presence of the obnoxious caller in the hope of convincing her that they were not pleasant people to visit.

Accordingly, one evening, when he returned from work and found the old lady present as usual, he began to talk loudly and in an irritated voice. Then growing more excited, he stamped about the room, knocking furniture right and left, and ended by going out and banging the door after him.

The old lady knitted away quietly through the confusion, and when the man was gone she turned to the family, and said in a comforting voice:

"It was lucky I was here, or you'd have had a bad time. But you needn't be frightened, I'll stay here with you till he gets over it."

A SNAKE AND CHILD STORY.

THE following remarkable incident is reported from the town of Koondroon, Victoria.

One evening last month, Mrs. J. M. Ware, wife of a leading man of the town, having put her child, eighteen months old, to bed, was astonished to hear it laughing merrily. Going into the bedroom she found the child scrambling over the head of the crib.

The mother, however, could see nothing on the bed, but being a nervous woman decided to carry her child into the kitchen. Returning to get the child's feeding-bottle, she was surprised to find it empty. Hearing something fall off the bed, she stooped to investigate, the result being that she narrowly escaped a bite from a large snake.

When her husband returned he lit a candle, placed it on the floor, and asked his wife to play the harmonium, thinking that the music might draw the snake from its hiding-place. This experiment failed.

Then the sewing-machine was rapidly worked for about five minutes, in hopes that the "burr and hum" might lure the reptile into open ground. This latter plan proved successful, for he slowly crawled across the floor until he reached the lighted candle, when a well-directed blow from Mr. Ware killed the brute, a tiger snake, four and a half feet in length.

When the child was brought in to see the snake it laughed just as its mother had heard it in the afternoon, and the parents are now convinced that for some time past the child had been in the habit of playing with this reptile, for it had always shown a great desire to be placed in its bed early in the evening, evidently a favourite resort of the snake, and had frequently surprised the mother by its merry laughter when left alone in the darkness.

AN ELECTRIC CITY.

GREAT FALLS, Montana, U.S.A., appears fairly entitled to the distinction of being called the electric city. At Black Eagle Falls, three miles above the town, an immense dam has been thrown across the Missouri. Not only are the street cars propelled and lighted by electricity from the power houses, but they are heated as well by electric radiators placed in each car.

Elevators, printing presses, cranes, and all kinds of machinery, are operated by the ubiquitous force. There are automatic excavators, electric pumps, and electric rock-crushers. A not uncommon sight on the streets is a mortar-mixer attached to an electric wire leading down from a pole.

The restaurants cook by electricity, the butcher employs it to chop his sausages, the grocer to grind his coffee, and the tailor to heat his goose. The subtle fluid is a welcome blessing in every home; the housewives run their sewing-machines and heat their flat-irons by electricity; they bake their cakes in wooden electric ovens, that can be set away on a shelf like pasteboard boxes. They have electric broilers and tea-kettles.

What a singular anomaly when one pauses to think of it: that of broiling steaks and heating flat-irons through the instrumentality of a waterfall!

AN ACT IN TWO SCENES.

"I HAVE a little surprise for you, Amy," said the enraptured young man half an hour after the wedding, in some embarrassment. "Excuse me for a moment."

He went out of the room and returned with a stout old lady with a determined expression of countenance.

"My dear," he said, "this is my mother. She—er—will live with us, you know."

"So glad. And I have a little surprise for you too, Harry."

She left the room, and returned in a moment with five fair-haired little girls, apparently ranging in age from three to thirteen.

"These are my little darlings, Harry," she whispered. "Lydia, Minerva, Penelope, Rachel, and Mehitabel kiss the gentleman. He is to be your new papa."

ETHEL: "Since she has married again, I do not believe that she deploras the death of her first husband at all."
Maude: "No, but her last husband does."

"THAT will do—that will do, madam," said a dentist to a lady who wanted a tooth out, and opened her mouth very wide; "I'm going to stand outside to operate."

MRS. DODBROKE: "What is meant by preferred creditors?"

Mr. Dodbroke: "The ones that don't bother you, usually."

TOM: "Have you read 'Two Men and a Girl'?"
What do you think of it?"

Kitty: "No; but I think the girl must have had a good time."

NELLIE: "Oh! do look at those pretty little cows."

Maud: "They are not cows, they are calves."

Nellie: "But what is the difference?"

Maud: "Why, cows give milk, and calves give jelly."

"AND are you sure you love him?"

"Am I sure? Do you see this dress?"

"Of course I do. What of it?"

"Will you kindly tell me if it bears the slightest resemblance to the present styles?"

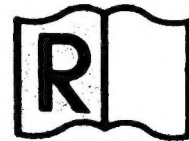
"Well, really it—er—it—"

"It doesn't."

"No."

"And I'm wearing it because he likes it."

Why is P.W. the most go-ahead paper? Because light moves at the rate of 186,000 miles per second, and "Pearson's Weekly" is light—no heavy reading matter in it. See?



ON DEAD MAN'S ISLE.

BEAUTIFUL among the beautiful, the Isle des Morts—in Port Arthur vernacular, Dead Man's Isle—slept in the languorous moonlight. Slept, to awake at an untimely hour. Contrary to the usual custom, an interment was to take place after nightfall. The military authorities had determined that the body of Private Trench, into which they at six o'clock had poured a double volley of bullets, should be buried at midnight instead of the next day.

And thus it happened that shortly before twelve o'clock at night the whale-boat was propelled by six pairs of arms across the lake-like channel, which played the part of Styx to the Settlement. It was not the ordinary crew that dipped the lambent blades in the silvery water. Some of Private Trench's comrades had begged permission to carry him to his island cell—the last he would occupy on this earth—and consent was given.

"We've o'n 'ad ter sling poor Trench ter th' guard room, sir," were the words in which their spokesman appealed to Captain Jourdain. "Yer 'av no objection, sir, ter our luggin' 'im cross ter Dead 'un's?"

The honest fellows, however, would, one and all, have sacrificed a month's pay rather than tender their kindly services to their dead comrade could they but have foreseen the sequel. For with them went Sergeant Slipshott, of the Civil Establishment, and three ladies, and the resulting episode was a tradition in the regiment for a generation.

There had been a terrible scene on the return of Mr. E. Trench Leppell, M.P., to Government Cottage from Gibbet Square, where he had witnessed the execution of Private Trench, and the reader who follows our narrative will be at no loss to understand the cause.

Private Trench, otherwise Ernest Trench Leppell, was Mr. Leppell's nephew. Mr. Leppell, M.P., on his travels through the British colonies, was accompanied by his two daughters, and Mr. Leppell's elder daughter and nephew had once been affianced. Since the breaking of this engagement—perhaps largely because of that circumstance—the nephew had withdrawn in the style of the service. So far, he repeated the experience of the Prodigal Son, but the latter chapters of the parable were not paralleled in this case. Mr. Leppell, M.P., being a nineteenth-century Christian, did not provide the faded calf. He showed his nephew the door. And straight from his uncle's door Trench, as he henceforth called himself, went to the enlistment depot, and to the dogs.

Trench's cousin Ida caused the scene at the Commandant's. As befitted the powerful and distinguished station of Mr. Leppell, the honourable member and his daughter were invited, on their visit to Port Arthur, to Government Cottage. And Mrs. Boote and the Misses Leppell were seated on the verandah when the staggering, stertorous-breathing, pallid-faced Member of Parliament was escorted into the garden by Captain Boote and Surgeon Slipshott.

At the approach of the three gentlemen, the ladies, alarmed, arose, and the younger ones passed quickly to meet their father.

"Father," they cried together, "are you ill?"

"Go back, please, ladies," Slipshott interrupted. "He is ill—but leave him to me. He wants quiet!"

The younger Miss Leppell, a girl of seventeen, with the affectionateness and indelicacy of her age, clung to her father as though her embrace could have freed him from the paralysis which seemed to have attacked him. His sister, equally distressed but more self-controlled, hurried away to prepare her father's room. Then one of the distraught explanations of his second child apparently penetrated to the stupefied consciousness of the stricken man, and awoke an idiotic response.

"What is it? I don't know; I don't know! Poor Erny's shot, shot—" Mechanically he went on repeating the words. To the hysterical girl they carried no significance, but he was mumbling them when they placed him on a bed, and Miss Leppell caught the syllable.

"What does he say? What is he saying about Erny?" she looked at the doctor. He would not meet her glance, and busied himself in attending to his patient. Commandant Boote affected not to hear.

"Is there anything I can do, Slipshott?" the latter asked. Slipshott bade him brusquely to take Miss Leppell away. That was no place for a lady. But the commandant did not hear distinctly, for Leppell just then started up and reiterated his parrot shriek, "Oh—Erny shot, Erny shot!"

"Doctor, doctor, tell me what he meant! He has had some shock to bring up to his mind my—my cousin's name. I had a cousin Ernest."

No glimpse of the fearful truth had yet dawned upon her. Although she had heard from Mrs. Boote that a soldier was to be shot that evening, she had done nothing more than give a passing thought to the incident. "Poor man," she had said, and then had proceeded to discuss with her hostess the difficulty of procuring suitable dress material for the hot season so far from "home."

"Poor Erny's shot, Erny's shot!"

"Doctor, Mr. Boote," she pleaded, "what does he mean?"

"Will you take her away, Boote?" Slipshott exclaimed. "I shall not be responsible for what happens if you don't."

Her father's distraction, his repetition of the one phrase, the doctor's obvious desire that she should withdraw from the room, now combined to force upon her a numbing horror, and, against her will, she linked her father's senseless utterance with what Mrs. Boote had told her of the military execution.

"Doctor, who was it that was—shot to-day? I insist upon knowing."

"Erny—Erny shot!" shrieked the man on the bed, writhing out of the sergeant's hands and thrusting himself forward, as though he was determined no one should answer the question but himself. For the moment all three believed that he had consciously replied, and while under that impression, Slipshott, saying, "Captain Boote, take my place here; Miss Leppell, come with me," led the way into the adjacent room.

"Miss Leppell," he said, as the young lady followed him,

and he placed a chair for her, "I have bad news for you. On your calmness now your father's life may depend. Promise me you will be calm!" A sympathetic but tactless fellow, Slipshott.

"I will—try," answered the girl.

"Then—the man—the soldier shot this evening—was your—"

"My cousin? Oh, merciful Heaven, it can't have been! He died years ago." She started from her seat, and, clenching her hands, beat her bosom with them.

"It was your cousin. Your father recognised him," said the doctor.

"But there must be, oh, there must be some mistake; father's been deceived by a likeness. Erny died, surely died—"

"To-night. I knew he was your cousin—before the execution."

She sank back into her seat. There was a momentary stillness in the room, like the lull on the sea margin between the surging of two waves.

"Yet you allowed my father, his uncle, to see him! Cruel, cruel to both!"

She moved to and fro in the room, blindly, not knowing she moved, and moaning as she went.

"I did my best to prevent any recognition. I did not know your father would be present till too late to stop him."

Her mood changed. Hitherto she was dry-eyed, too shocked to weep, for her concern had been chiefly for her father. Now, her former affection revived, and with it a poignant despair, as she realised that it was not alone her uncle's nephew and her cousin who had been shot, but her own lover.

And, with the rising of this fresh emotion, the tears came quickly to her eyes. Between the convulsions of her sobs, she upbraided Slipshott:

"You knew he was what he was! And that my father could have saved him with a word. And still you let him die!"

"I could not interfere. Nor could your father have saved him. No power except the Queen's could have rescued him once the sentence was approved of at headquarters."

Then she insisted on knowing all that Slipshott knew. As delicately as possible he communicated to her the substance of what he had learnt from Private Trench as to his relationship to Mr. Leppell and herself. Trench had opened his mind to the doctor a few hours before his platooning. But Slipshott did not tell the girl anything of the circumstances which had preceded the execution—of a violent attack by Trench on his uncle—and how the old man had fallen in an agony of terrible grief on the corpse.

"He died—like a man?" she asked at last.

"He died like a man," he was replying as a gust of the evening breeze brought to them through the open doorway and windows the concluding bars of the "British Grenadiers."

"Oh!" she placed her fingers on her ears, and bent her head on her lap in the abandonment of pain, for woman in great suffering forgets to posture. "Oh, that on such a day they can play such tunes! How is it that they can play such tunes? To play such lively tunes!"

Mechanically she repeated the words, much as her father was mumbling over in the next room the last syllables his intelligence had framed. Then she, too, glided off into oblivion, on seeing which Slipshott thanked God. He could manage a fainting-fit, or an attack of delirium, but his limited science was at fault—what man's is not!—when the curious involutions of a woman's heart are in question.

The girl came to herself an hour later. Her father, by the aid of drugs, was now in silent unconsciousness. The doctor had sent for his wife—the younger girl was helpless in the sick room—to assist Mrs. Boote, and when Miss Leppell opened her eyes it was upon Mrs. Slipshott, a stranger, that they fell. She turned her head away.

"You are better, dear?" in soft, cooling tones asked the tender nurse. "I am the doctor's wife, Mrs. Slipshott, you know, and, dear," she bent down and took the girl's head to her breast—"dear, I will tell you all you want to know."

A very loving and tactful woman, Mrs. Slipshott, but something, we suspect, of a fibber. For she excelled in dispensing to invalid minds and souls those half truths which, in spite of the moralists, are so comforting to the stricken.

"Father?" the girl asked feebly.

"Sleeping soundly, dear—and will be almost well in the morning."

A reckless assertion, Mrs. Slipshott, but a wise one, for it relieved the suffering girl from anxiety.

"And—and the other?"

Now, a woman of less tact would have answered this question as though it referred to the sufferer's sister. Mrs. Slipshott, however, having had a talk with the doctor, went to the root of the matter. She whispered:

"He looks very happy—my husband saw him. And I will take you to-morrow to—where he rests, if you are well enough."

"Oh! that I could see him! I loved him so, I loved him so!" was the girl's plaint. "I loved him so—I would have married him in spite of all, but for father." Again it seemed as if the hysterics would master her.

"Oh, that I could see him! I'd give worlds to see him! And my father saw him shot! Oh! terrible, terrible!"

"Dear, will you be strong and patient, and try and control yourself," said Mrs. Slipshott, "if I promise that you shall see him to-morrow!"

All the strength she could command Miss Leppell put into her eager half-delirious assent.

"I'll be so good and patient if you promise that."

"I promise it," replied the doctor's wife, only concerned to get the sick girl to sleep. "You shall see him once again if you pass a good night. Now try and sleep, dear."

And the girl nestled into the pillows, and soon after seemed to sleep.

A few minutes later the doctor came in. He told his wife that the burial would take place that night. "Jourdain," he said, "thinks it best so. It'll save any scene in the morning, if either Leppell or the girl ask about the body."

"I have promised her," whispered Mrs. Slipshott, "that she

shall see him. I did so to quieten her poor mind—I did not know how to manage it else. She will, perhaps, not remember when the morning comes, and when she's told he's buried."

Neither knew that the girl had heard their conversation. The night was a still one. The silence broken only by the clank of a distant chain, the foot of a sentry, or the whistles of warders exchanging signals. Mrs. Slipshott, her patient slumbering, as she thought, passed to the verandah to enjoy the peace of the hour and beauty of the scene, and to dream over the strange sequence of events which had connected the English visitor with the tragedy on Gibbet Square.

Scarcely had she left the room before the girl arose and began to dress herself noiselessly. Her weakness was temporarily conquered by the force of unreasoned will, and her morbid desire to behold the features of her dead lover found an ally in the cunning which so frequently seizes upon persons who have been suddenly exposed to nervous shocks.

Dressed, she went out of the room by another door from that by which Mrs. Slipshott had gone to the verandah—out into the garden—out into the lane, led by the saddest of chances, or drawn by the gossamer threads of Fate—to Gibbet Square.

When the military had retired that evening from the fatal soil to a merry quick step, they had left behind them the corpse of Private Trench, a corporal's guard, and Prisoner Trench's coffin.

Into the third the second put the first. The guard did not screw it down. Someone had blundered; someone had forgotten the screw-driver. To open the shell the corporal had been obliged to prise open the lid with a bayonet, it having been fastened with a couple of screws. That having been accomplished, with his men's aid, he dropped Trench's body therein. Then, posting one of the men as sentinel ten paces away, marched towards the barracks. His orders were that the body was to be left on the square pending the arrival of the fatigue party to carry it to the pier, whence it would be transferred to Dead Man's Isle.

In honour of the distinguished M.P., the countersign for the night was "Leppell."

And when, some hours subsequently, the sentry—cursing inwardly all the Deities, evil and good, of whom his limited theology had knowledge, because they had permitted his selection for this eerie duty—challenged, with trembling lips, a white figure which came suddenly from under the shadow of the Government Cottage wall, and the figure answered, "Leppell," he thought, in letting it pass, he was well within the countless corners of the Mutiny Act, the articles of war, the regulations for convict guards, and other literature which commanded him to well and duly serve her Majesty the Queen, and all the rest of it. How could he know, he said next day, when he was being tied up to the halberds to receive twenty lashes, how could he know the girl was mechanically telling him her name, and not uttering the countersign? Of course he couldn't know, but he was stripped all the same.

Well, the figure passed the sentry, and the sentry, concluding, as many a more intelligent man would have done in his place, that a visitant to the ghastly spot could have but one object, the viewing of the dead, murmured, "Over there, ma'am; he's over there."

And the figure which consciously knew nothing of what it was doing, which was simply obeying the impulses of a dominant morbidity of idea, went as he directed it to the oblong box that was bathed in the moonlight.

The great agony of the cry, "My Ernest, oh! my Erny!" which seemed to ascend to the still, star-decked heavens, reached the piazza of the Government Cottage. It roused Mrs. Slipshott from her dreaming: it startled Boote, Jourdain, and Slipshott, sitting over their wine in the commandant's dining-room; it terrified the good fellows of the fatigue party on their way to screw down and remove the coffin. The doctor's wife, noticing then for the first time the girl's absence, called to her husband. He and Boote had recognised the voice of Miss Leppell, and instinctively understood, when Mrs. Slipshott told them the girl had disappeared, whence the cry had proceeded.

"She's got to his coffin!" exclaimed the surgeon, as they hurried to the spot. "God! she'll go mad after this! Wife, this is too bad of you!"

They found her nursing Trench's head on her lap. She had sat down on the ground, had partly withdrawn the body, and was bending over it and crooning to it with sweet words and tender phrases. The sentry, struck with horror at her shriek, dared not approach this weird guest of the dead. He stood, shaking on his musket's support.

"Dearest, my dearest!" they heard her say just as they came up. "You would not come to me, and so I have come to you. Don't think me foolish, Erny; you wouldn't come and I craved to see you so." She pressed her lips to his as though she were stopping his remonstrances. "Ah, love! all this way to find you. And they told me you were dead! And I believed them, Erny—"

Mrs. Slipshott tried to release her grasp of the dead man. The officers, at the same instant, quietly pulled the body away.

"Do not go away!" and she clasped the corpse tighter.

"Dearest, don't go! You're vexed, Erny, because I believed you dead. I should not, should I?"

And then, with a heartrending sob, she ceased.

With difficulty they raised her to her feet, and released the dead man from her embrace. Mrs. Slipshott wound her arms round her and sought to bend the girl's head to her own bosom so that she should not see the officers force the corpse back into the shell. She yielded to the gentle lady's pressure, but her eyes remained fixed, as though she would reanimate her love by the intensity of their gaze.

Mrs. Slipshott sought to lead her gently away. This, however, she refused, saying, with an imperial determination:

"Where he goes I go—to the very last. We have been parted too long."

Captain Boote, the civil, and Captain Jourdain, the military commandant, in whispered consultation with Slipshott, were for removing the girl by force to her apartments. Slipshott, however, insisted upon her accompanying the corpse to Dead Man's Isle.

"It's a risk, but it's the lesser of the two: Remove her forcibly, and she'll become a raving lunatic on the spot. Let her go and there's a chance of saving her reason."

And so a man of the fatigue party, which had now arrived, having been dispatched to the cottage for the younger Miss Leppell, said for wraps for her sister and Mrs. Slipshott, the singular funeral procession was continued.

"You will carry the corpse to the pier end," was Captain Jourdain's instruction to the sergeant. "The men who have volunteered will there take charge. Then return to barracks and report."

"Won't you come with us?" asked the doctor of the captain. "Three ladies—one mad, one hysterical, will be too much for me."

"Dr. Slipshott, you forget yourself, sir," said his superior officer Commandant Boote.

"What, follow a private, not to say a murderer?—not for all the daughters of all the M.P.'s alive," said Captain Jourdain, turning on his heel.

Gently the crew beached the boat in the tiny cove; with voices hushed and feet that tried to tread softly on the pebbles, they went about the few simple preparations for the passage of the dead.

The two convict-diggers had brought the bier to the shelving sand. And, stern and sombre though their companionship with the souls at rest had made them—neither had set a foot on the mainland, though but a few hundred yards distant, for several years—they were moved to wondering exclamations at the presence of the ladies.

"Them leddies?—Be they mo'ners?" queried one soldier in a low voice.

"Yes, one o' em's Private Trench's sweet'art. Jist kem down by chance, as 'twere, to the settlement in time to see in die."

"I didn't see him die," said Miss Leppell simply. "I was too late."

By which all knew she had heard the men's words, and Slipshott shuddered at the task before him. Here was an intelligence dethroned, and yet an intelligence with some of its faculties abnormally keen. What should he do? He had read of such cases in his text-books, but his own experience had not furnished him with a parallel.

She answered the question herself—Nothing! As the bearers stepped off she followed them. She would not allow either Mrs. Slipshott or her sister to support her, and when the doctor tendered his arm, she acknowledged the courtesy with a quiet "Thank you—no!"

At the graveside, when the bearers halted, she paused for a moment only to say: "While you make ready I will learn about the spot;" and then, passing from one neighbouring grave to another, traced the inscription on their stones by the moonlight, and seemingly studied the position of other but unmarked mounds. Coming back to the group, she bade them remember the position of Trench's resting place.

"One, two, three, four, five, is it, from Robert Young? Sea, doctor—Robert Young, accidentally drowned, soldier of the 51st; erected by sorrowing comrades—you can't forget that poor man's grave. Look at the verse:

His melancholy fate doth plainly prove
The frail uncertainty of human life.
Oh! may his soul obtain that blessed abode
Which knows no human misery or strife.

"There," she went on, "five from Young's grave—they gave him poor poetry, but good sentiment, and they won't give Erny anything. But I'll send out a stone—they won't object, will they, doctor?—and then, my mea, you'll remember to erect it over the fifth grave from Young's. And now are you ready?"

"Doctor," she began again, after a minute-long interval, "Doctor, there's no clergyman here. You must act as minister—as priest. All doctors were priests once, weren't they? You won't, doctor? You're disobliging. I will say what I remember myself, then—when I heard Erny was dead, I read the Burial Service over so often that I remember much of it."

And the poor stricken lady, distraught for love's sake, like Ophelia, began to repeat the noble words which link the two infinities—that of life to that of death.

To the end of the first Psalm she continued, and then passed from the "Amen" of the Psalm to the verses customarily said "when the corpse is made ready." "Man that is born of woman." Here the mechanism of her memory failed her. The doctor noiselessly drew nearer, for he thought the crisis had come.

"Finish!" she said to him. But, for the life of him, he could not recall a word of the sublime ritual.

The convict sextons lowered the coffin into the shallow grave. And it was a sexton, the sterner of the two, who ended the office.

"For as much as it has pleased Almighty God of His great mercy to take unto Himself the soul of our dear brother here departed, we therefore commit his body to the ground; earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust—"

She stooped, and gathering a handful of the mould, scattered it on the lid. Ah! If she had bedewed it with a tear also.

"Whereby He is able to subdue all things to Himself."

"That is not all?" she said to the sexton as he stopped.

The man, whose unsuspected and unofficial function it was to say a portion of the Burial Service over the dead interred in the absence of a clergyman, resumed his recitation. His recollection of the ritual was good; for, inasmuch as the system didn't make it obligatory upon the chaplains to attend convict burials, and the Protestant ministers frequently availed themselves of the option to stay away, this convict sexton, moved by genuine regret that any poor fellow-sinner should be deprived of the last poor tribute to his humanity, had memorized the rite. The system caused almost as many unofficial kindnesses as it occasioned official cruelties. That is one of its few virtues.

The sexton resumed—to be met at the thanksgiving with the painfullest of interruptions.

"We give Thee hearty thanks for that it hath pleased Thee to deliver this our brother out of the miseries of this sinful world."

"I will not thank Him," she cried. "I will not!" She raised her head defiantly to the heavens.

The tears came now. They came in an impetuous torrent that swept away the last bulwark of reason, and not as gentle and benignant showers to quench the fires of her sorrow.

"No, I will not, for He is cruel! To think my Erny should be buried with the prayers of a convict!"

The moon was still as brilliant, and the waters as placid, when the party returned to the pier as when they had set out.

And there the resemblance ended. The quiet of the night was broken. Up to the unmoved and smiling heavens the girl sent repented and accusing cries, and sought to arraign their justice by throwing herself into the channel. The doctor was obliged to call to his aid a couple of the soldiers, otherwise, the attempt on her life failed, she would have upset the boat in her maniacal struggling. She never recovered her reason.

Nor, though her father survived to return "home" and to publish in an English magazine an account of his colonial tour, do we think he ever recovered his? For he pronounced the system "as worthy of great admiration."

A WORD WITH A FALSE WITNESS.

IN a small restaurant close to a certain County Court a P. W. representative had a conversation the other day with an individual who, until recently, made a substantial livelihood by swearing false oaths.

"A reliable perjurer," said he, "is worth a gold mine to a solicitor who has been struck off the rolls. There are several broken-down lawyers who, shut out from the Court, make it part of their business to keep in contact with men who, for a consideration, will swear to a lie whenever required. The names of these people they place on their books, and whenever a dishonest litigator in want of a favourable witness applies to them they are ready to supply the demand within half an hour."

"For instance, take a swindler who is in want of money. It is quite easy for him at night-time to feign to have been knocked over by an omnibus or cab, and then to sue for damages. To make his case thoroughly strong he can even take his false witnesses with him, so that they may put in an appearance when the name of the driver is taken. The result of the overwhelming presence of witnesses generally is that the case is settled out of Court."

"In this manner any number of blackmailing cases are got up which never come into Court on account of the defenceless position of the victim. The blackmailer, with his accomplices, merely pays his victim a visit, during which they make a definite charge, and the usual result is they retire with the money they asked for in their pockets."

"Perjury in the witness-box has been reduced to a fine art, but there are few really capable men at the business, although plenty of second-raters are always to be found in the neighbourhood of Police Courts. These men are usually employed by fourth-rate detectives, who take up cases on spec, and to whom a single lie may mean many pounds."

"They seldom go into the box, for their 'evidence' as a rule is so 'complete' that the opposing side gives way. It is quite easy to get hold of a man willing to swear an ordinary lie for a shilling or two, while, as for *alibi* witnesses, they can be obtained in almost any low public-house for the price of a few mugs of beer."

"Some false witnesses, however, are paid very high sums. A friend of mine abroad was once offered as much as £50 by a foreign Count if he would swear to a certain thing; the next day he was offered £10 more by the opposing side, who, of course, had no idea that he had already been approached."

"DEAR TIM.—I am sending you my old coat by parcels post. I have cut off the buttons because it will make it lighter. You will find them in the breast-pocket. Yours, etc., PAT."

BROWN: "What's all that row in the kitchen, Nora? Can't you pacify Robert and make him stop that howling?"

Nora (the cook, indignantly): "Young Master Robby pulled an oicicle off the back fence, sor, an' laid it under the kitchen stove, and now he shwars of sholeo it."

"SEE here, doctor, why do you always order up two brandy-and-sodas in the morning?"

"Why, you see," responded the doctor, "when I drink one brandy-and-soda in the morning I always feel like another man, and then I'm bound in courtesy to treat that other man, and the second brandy-and-soda is for him, don't you see?"

1d. SEASONABLE STORIES. 1d.

The next issue of **SHORT STORIES**, which is published on January 2nd, contains Five Complete Stories, both Humorous and Pathetic.

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SUGGESTIONS TO YOUNG REPORTERS.

A YOUNG man, desiring to become a reporter on the daily press, received the following suggestions from an old hand, to whom he applied for professional tips:—

"In rescuing drowning men, it must always be when they were 'going down for the third time.' No case is on record of a rescue when the sufferer was going down for the first time."

"When a gentleman gives a bank note it must always be 'crisp.'"

"Thuds are of two descriptions, the 'dull' and the 'sickening.'"

"Of course, every writer knows that fire is always mentioned as the 'devouring flame.'"

"What 'wildfire' is no one exactly knows, but when anything spreads rapidly, remember, it 'spreads like wildfire.'"

"Flags must always be 'flung to the breeze,' no matter whether there is any breeze or not."

"If you can manage to get an assault, a dog-fight, and a burglary all into one column, do it, for it will secure that beautiful and well-known heading, 'A Carnival of Crime.'"

"Speaking of winning or losing money, it must always be a 'cool' £500 or £5,000. However heated the struggle, the amount must always be 'cool.'"

"Always remember that a man is 'launched into eternity,' not hanged a certain time."

"When a person after an accident is found to be dead, it is best not to say so, but that the 'vital spark had fled.'"

"Speeches on the political side which your paper advocates should always be 'ringing' speeches."

CAN ACTING BE TAUGHT?

MR. HERMANN VEZIN'S OPINION.

MR. HERMANN VEZIN shares with Henry Irving the distinction of being the finest tragedian and exponent of Shakespearian characters on the English stage. When the manager of the Lyceum Theatre was ill Mr. Vezin played the part of Macbeth for eight nights, receiving one hundred and twenty guineas for his trouble. He has fulfilled the leading rôles in eleven Shakespearian plays, carries almost the whole of Shakspeare in his head, and has played Othello, the Merchant of Venice, Macbeth, and Hamlet all within a week.

An actor of this scope ought, therefore, to be an authority on questions pertaining to the stage, to hear his views on which subject P. W. had an interview with him the other morning. In reply to a number of questions Mr. Vezin said:

"A man certainly cannot be taught to act unless he possesses the material for such a calling. For example, no one can teach passion or pathos, but he can show how passion or pathos should be applied."

"In my opinion, the stage is conducted on entirely wrong lines. Nowadays it is the best advertised person and the man with most money to back him who succeeds—not the genius, not the most capable actor. Money will procure anyone an introduction to the stage."

"I consider that there should be schools for acting, like there are for nearly everything else. A man should be taught to speak properly, and to have control over his muscles. It is impossible for him to teach himself to act, because he cannot see the effect of his work like the painter or the writer."

"Again, everyone has their lines of least resistance. The actor wants to be trained to have no lines of least resistance whatever, or he will acquire mannerisms that eventually become exceedingly distasteful to his audiences."

"So few men are taught that the majority of actors are handicapped by their mannerisms; a familiar inflection of the voice, a favourite posture, a movement of the hand, a jerk of the head; all these are lines of least resistance, which, after constant repetition, become irritating, and this should never be the case with an adequately-taught actor."

"A man who has no feeling can never express himself on the stage; he might as well give up all attempt at once. An actor can only produce what is in him—that is to say, phases of his character. If he has no passion, no pathos, in his soul, he cannot be passionate or pathetic on the stage."

"This is why we have so few really great actors; as a rule an actor is not great in more than half a dozen parts during his lifetime. Edmund Kean was probably the greatest actor that ever breathed; he was great in just six parts, and no more, for the simple reason that his feelings and power of expressing them were limited."

"Our supply of good actors will remain deficient so long as actor-managers fill the leading rôles, even if we institute regular tuition. Their time is so occupied that, being unable to look about and discover talent for themselves, they leave it to the public to pronounce what is good and what is not."

"As a proof of how unsatisfactory this method is, a piece has been played to almost empty houses—to the gas, as we call it—in Manchester, while in Liverpool, a few miles away, the identical piece has filled the theatre night after night. In Paris they view the actor-manager with disfavour, and do not permit him to produce a piece of his own writing in his own theatre."

Now a King has Paid his Debts.—Great Authors and their Methods.—Sir Edward Malet at Berlin.—Hungary's Greatest Writer.—An Australian Monte Cristo.
See January "Search Light," price 3d.

QUESTIONS WORTH ANSWERING.

REPLIES.

1768. Are there any Living Organisms that can Exist and Grow without Atmospheric Air?

Many microscopical fungi, including numerous forms of bacteria, are able to exist and grow in the absence of atmospheric air. Such forms invariably cause fermentations, and it is in these fermentative changes that sufficient energy is freed to enable the organism to perform its appointed labours. The fungus of common yeast, for instance, can grow and multiply indefinitely in the total absence of air; whilst to one sort of bacterium the oxygen of the air is a rank and deadly poison.

1769. Which now Extinct Nation has most Affected the Subsequent History of the World?

The Phœnicians, or the former inhabitants of the region bounded on the south by Palestine, Laodicea on the north, and Lebanon on the east, and west by the Mediterranean. The Phœnicians were the first distinctly business people of whom we have any record. They were also the first explorers and the first colonisers. They originated and influenced the commercial policy of the ancient world, which in turn was the parent of that of the Middle Ages and our own. Though anything but a literary people, the world owes to them (Reply 1767) the alphabet on which is based the literature of the Western world. They invented this purely for business purposes, because the cuneiform and hieroglyphic methods were too cumbersome for their business transactions. They were the first sailors who ever deliberately went out of sight of land, and the first to build sea-going ships. They colonised the shores of the Mediterranean, and founded Carthage. They explored the Atlantic coast and discovered the British Islands; while on the other side of the world they traded with Malabar and Ceylon, and, by bringing the products of these distant climes together in their markets, they laid the foundations of international commerce.

1768. Who is the Best Living Example of the Truth of the Saying "Nothing Succeeds like Success?"

Among living men no career has been so signally and uniformly successful as that of Lord Wolseley. His victories led naturally to promotion, and his promotion has always been justified by subsequent success. It is no disparagement of his military genius and his conspicuous abilities in camp and field, to say, that he owes much to the prestige of his brilliant and unbroken successes. As a leader his name, probably, inspires more confidence than any other, and he is regarded by soldiers as an embodiment of that success which is bound to succeed. In another sphere Mr. J. D. Rockefeller is a striking example. He is probably the richest man in the world, and is worth at the least \$25,000,000. Yet twenty years ago he was a newspaper reporter earning £3 a week. Then began his connection with oil; and his success in the organisation of which he is now the head has been phenomenal even among American millionaires.

1768. Why does Oil on Troubled Water have Practically no Effect Close in Shore?

The calming influence of oil on water has been shown by recently-made experiments to spring from the fact that the oil film forms a shield, thin but effectual, between the wind and the water. Broken water out at sea is always due to wind, ergo, if wind can be kept off the water the waves will have no foam crests. But in-shore waves are due not only to wind but to eddies, cross-currents, shallows, and rocks. The oil forms no protection against these. The water breaks up from below, scatters the oil film, and deprives it of all its pacifying effects.

1768. Is there any River on Earth which Flows from the Sea Inland?

There is one in Africa, near the Gulf of Aden, which connects Lake Assal with the sea. Lake Assal is between six and seven hundred feet below the sea level; and twenty-two miles inland. The lake and the sea are connected by a channel, along which flows a salt water river whose height and volume vary with the tide. It is stated that the influx of water from the ocean is exactly balanced by the evaporation from the surface of the lake, the level of which consequently remains the same from year's end to year's end.

1764. Is there any Means of Making Electric Force Visible?

Yes. If a flat cylindrical glass vessel be filled to a depth of an inch or so with pure anhydrous oil of turpentine, and a small quantity of sulphate of quinine be distributed evenly through the liquid, the particles may be made to show the lines of electric force. Two wires leading from the terminals of an influence machine—with their free ends furnished with small metallic balls—should dip into the turpentine. When a current is set up the white particles of quinine will be seen to group themselves in graceful curves, which are the lines of electric force. The experiment can be varied by sending a series of discharges through the liquid. The particles of quinine leave the positive pole of the machine and group themselves about the negative pole in streamers, which again represent the lines of electric force.

1768. Which Single Discovery has had the Greatest Effect on the Literature of the World?

The discovery by some unknown genius who lived far back in the ancient times of Egypt of the method of translating the hieroglyphic, or picture-writing, which was used for recording events on stone, into the hieratic or priestly writing, used for inscribing prayers, hymns, and incantations on papyrus. This form of writing is so ancient that it had begun to fall into disuse when Moses led the children of Israel out of Egypt. There is only one complete manuscript of it in existence, and this is the Papyrus Priami, which was found in a tomb belonging to the eleventh dynasty. It was from this that the Phœnicians selected twenty-one out of twenty-two of the characters of that alphabet, which they so improved that it superseded all other alphabets, excepting the Chinese. In one form or another it has become the universal medium of literary intercommunication among most enlightened peoples of the world. Greece, Rome, and Arabia gave literature to the world west of the Red Sea, but without the alphabet which the Phœnicians got from the hieratic script, probably literature, and therefore to a great extent civilisation would have remained impossible for an indefinite period.

1767. Has the Thames ever been a Tributary of the Rhine?

This geographical condition once existed at a period anterior to the dawn of history, but probably subsequent to the appearance of man in Western Europe. At that time the land stood some 500 feet higher than at present. The British Isles formed a solid mass, continuous with Scandinavia, Denmark, and Holland in the east, and with France in the south. A great river flowed to the south-west down the valley which separated Ireland from Great Britain; another drained the depression between England and France; and a third, the largest of all, ran to the north along the broad valley extending between the British Isles and Scandinavia. This great river was an extension of the Rhine. After flowing to the west through what are now the Low Countries, it curved round to the north, opposite what is now Norfolk and Suffolk, and at this bend it was joined by a large tributary from the west, which we may call the Thames, though its course was very much prolonged in an eastward and north-eastward direction. The other rivers which now drain our eastern seaboard also formed tributaries to the ancient Rhine, which fell into the sea somewhere between the Shetland Islands and Scandinavia.

1768. Why should Royal Families be, as a Rule, the Most Prone to Insanity?

Royal families intermarry much with each other for political and dynastic reasons, and it is a well-attested fact that close breeding impoverishes the stock, and produces a degenerated offspring. Consanguineous marriages, too, are common among them, and though, where cousins are both healthy and of a good stock, the offspring, according to the latest authorities, is equally healthy with that of unrelated parents, yet any tendency to disease in related parents appears in a greater degree in their children, together with marked deterioration of the nervous system. When to these predisposing causes is added the fact that in the life of royalty there are often times of intense mental anxiety, painful vicissitudes of fortune, and, in some cases, an ever present brooding sense of lurking danger, it is not difficult to understand why Royal families should be, as a rule, prone to insanity. The physical and mental condition of such a life are most likely to produce and develop it; and, further, having once appeared, the principle of heredity, peculiarly active in this disease, spreads and intensifies it. It has also been shown by some of the best authorities on mental alienation that few things tend more strongly to disturb the balance of mind than the habitual use of absolute or nearly absolute power coupled with the most perfect ease in obtaining the gratification of all personal desires. Only the best moral natures strengthened by a rigid discipline can withstand the fatal tendency of these unnatural conditions.

1768. To what Extent are we indebted to the Sense of Taste for Distinguishing one Flavour from another?

It would appear from experiments that have been made that the senses of taste and smell are very dependent upon each other, different fibres of the organ of taste being capable of receiving different impressions from the same sapid substance. Much of the perfection of the sense of taste is often due to the sapid substances being also odorous, and exciting the simultaneous action of the sense of smell. This is shown by the imperfection of the taste of such substances when their action on the olfactory nerves is prevented by closing the nostrils. Many fine wines lose much of their apparent excellence if the nostrils are held close while they are drunk. This would seem to indicate that the keener our smelling powers the more distinctly do we distinguish the flavours of things that are being tasted by us. The extent to which we are indebted to the sense of taste for distinguishing flavours necessarily seems to depend upon our sense of smell. It should be remembered that flavour is not taste. It may be approximately described as a stimulus which excites about equally the senses of taste and smell, and cannot be perceived when either of these is in abeyance.

1770. What Evidence is there to Support the Assertion that "All Male Corpses Float on their Faces and all Female Corpses on their Backs?"

This assertion is not universally true but it is generally so, and the reason is to be found in the different dispositions of fatty tissues on the male and female body, and also in the different location and distribution of the breathing apparatus. The chest of a healthy man is covered with tough dense muscle of high specific gravity, while that of a woman is covered with adipose tissue of comparatively small specific gravity. Again, a man breathes more from the diaphragm while a woman breathes chiefly from the ribs, thus inflating the upper part of the lungs more than the lower. The result is that the lightest part of a woman's body is the external and internal region of the chest, consequently the female dead-body usually floats on the back, that is, with its lightest portion upmost. In the case of a man a very large part of the lungs runs down the upper part of the back. This coupled with the falling forward of the head, which is heavier than that of a woman, causes the male corpse to float on its face. It must, however, be remembered, that in the case of a lean woman and a fat man the positions would be reversed.

CONDITIONS.

We shall be glad to receive replies to any of the questions asked here from our readers. Each reply must bear the writer's name and address. We shall print the best reply to each question, and shall pay for all matter printed at our ordinary rate of two guineas a column. The same reader may send replies to any number of queries. Envelopes should be marked "Replies," in the top left-hand corner, and answers to the questions in any issue of the paper must reach us by first post on the Tuesday of the week following that for which the paper is dated. Payment will only be made for replies published. Authorities on which replies are based must be given. Half-a-crown will be paid on publication for every question received which is considered worthy of insertion.

QUESTIONS.

1791. Which English king was most essentially "the man of the age" in which he lived?

1792. Are there any satisfactory reasons for believing that the moon was ever inhabited by beings similar to those which dwell on earth?

1793. On which occasion has an act of personal devotion had the greatest effect upon the issue of a battle?

1794. Which of the rivers of the world has its source at the greatest elevation?

1795. Ought a-cough to be encouraged or resisted?

1796. Which is the best instance in Nature of the adaptation of food to the consumer?

1797. Which reigning sovereign possesses the least actual control over the affairs of his or her country?

1798. Is it true that when a railway line runs north and south the eastern rail wears out before the western one? If yes, why?

1799. To which of our racial ingredients do we Britons chiefly owe our commercial instincts and abilities?

1800. Why is it easier to perform feats of horsemanship when the animal is travelling in a circle than when it is going straight?

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THE BEAUTIFUL SNOW.

Softly the beautiful snow descends,
Covering meadow and hill and bough;
Its pure white mantle—what a charm it lends—
The winter is with us now.

Softly the beautiful snow descends,
Covering lakelet and streamlet and slough;
Covering brooklet and creeklet and springlet,
And the shed of the old brindle cow.

Softly the beautiful snow descends,
And it strikes the earth with a thud,
And embraces the dust with a clammy embrace,
And converts everything into mud.

"The Beautiful Snow." "Who wrote it?" they ask.
I blush, and loath to reply;
But I hope you'll excuse me—I'm modest, dear friends—
'Twas I that wrote it, 'twas I.

MEN'S FICKLENESS IN DRESS.

MEN make chronic complaint that women are always changing the fashion of their clothing, whereas the truth is that ever since women, emerging from the primitive times of the fig-leaf, have worn drapery, the manner of making it has varied little.

They have always worn a skirt and waist. The width, shape, and ornamentation of these have altered from age to age, and even from season to season. But however cunningly women might, for the sake of variety, change the details of their attire, the fundamental basis has always been a skirt and waist, and so probably it will always be for the ordinary and universal dress of the female sex. The marked and radical changes in clothing have been in that of men, not of women.

Examine any book of costumes, and you will be surprised to see through how many changes of garb man has passed before the present practical but, ugly costume of the "lordly" sex in civilised lands evolved itself from his multifarious, tentative moultings. Of course such vast changes—far beyond woman's fanciful freaks in mere decoration—took time for their accomplishment.

How long was he in getting from the fig-leaf and bearskin to the tunic and tights, from tights to knee-breeches, and in elongating these into the trousers of the present day? Let men read up a little on this subject, and they will have to admit that while they from the beginning have been boxing the compass in a sartorial way, women's garments have in principle remained the same.

A GIRL'S ADVENTURE.

RECENTLY the closed door of the famous French prison of the Conciergerie, through which Marie Antoinette, Charlotte Corday, the Girondins, Danton, Robespierre, and many other famous people went to their death in the days of the Revolution, has disappeared.

The door had not been used since 1814, when it was sealed into the wall. For a considerable time the official guillotine was kept in an apartment in the Conciergerie to which this famous and terrible door led.

This apartment was occasionally visited by tourists, who showed a morbid interest in the guillotine. According to Sanson, who was the executioner at this period, the English were of all visitors the most cold-blooded in this respect.

Sanson related that on one occasion an English family, consisting of father, mother, and three young girls, presented themselves at the Conciergerie and asked to see the guillotine. He exhibited it to them, and explained its methods of operation. Some bundles of hay were produced, and Sanson dropped the knife upon them, and cut them in two.

But this was not enough for the youngest of the English girls—a very pretty child of about sixteen, who had flaxen hair, and sweet, innocent, gentle eyes. After exacting from the executioner an account of the minutest details of the dreadful "toilet of the condemned," she demanded to be put into the machine, just as persons are who are executed.

The executioner shrank back, astonished, and looked at the girl's father.

"Yes," said the Englishman, "if she wants to do it, why, let her!"

The executioner thereupon tied up the young girl's limbs, and fastened her to the "carriage." Then he stopped.

"On, no—go on!" the girl exclaimed. "There's something more!"

Shuddering, Sanson covered the girl's head with the hood, placed it in the terrible receptacle, and pushed the carriage beneath the knife.

Then, as he stood waiting, he firmly expected to hear the girl call, "Go on! there's something else!" when nothing else remained but to drop the knife.

However, the English girl pronounced herself satisfied at this stage, and was liberated, highly pleased with her "interesting" experiments.

ALL BUT.

"DEAR Mabel, do you love me?"
"O-h, George!"
"Don't you, Mabel? Just a little tiny bit?"
"Well, y-e-s, George."
"And if I married you, would your father furnish us a house?"
"Yes, George."
"And take me into partnership?"
"Yes, George."
"And would your mother keep away from us, except when I invited her?"
"She would, George."
"And your brothers and sisters, too?"
"Why, certainly, George."
"And of course the old gentleman would settle my debts?"
"Of course, George."
"Darling, will you marry me?"
"No, George."

ABOUT DOCTORS.

At the present moment there are more than 301,000 members of the medical profession in Great Britain and Ireland. This includes some 3,000 registered practitioners resident abroad.

Nearly half of this number are serving the English provinces. London, with its 4,000,000 inhabitants, engages 5,407 medical men, while Scotland and Ireland, with a combined population of 8½ millions, only find employment for 5,424.

Registration is not compulsory upon medical men. But those who are not registered cannot recover any charges in a court of law, either for medical or surgical advice or attendance. Any person who wilfully and falsely pretends to be a physician is liable to a fine not exceeding £20.

It should be stated that a surgeon does not promise to perform a cure, nor does he undertake to use the highest possible degree of skill. But he does undertake to exercise an ordinary amount of care, and a fair, reasonable, and competent degree of skill.

If any medical practitioner by culpable want of attention, or from want of knowledge, causes injury to a patient, he is liable to an action for damages. It must, however, be something substantial. It would never do if medical men were liable to a criminal investigation for every slip, every error of judgment. For instance, a man who sets a broken arm or a broken leg carelessly would be criminally responsible for the consequences, but a man who called a sprain a strain would not.

The matter of fees is left entirely to the discretion of a doctor. Competition suffices to keep them down. As a rule patients are divided into classes, based upon their presumed incomes, the rental being taken as an average test for this.

It is interesting to know that a master is not responsible for the payment of debts incurred by his servants for medical attendance, unless he personally sends for the doctor.

Finally, a word of warning to those who are not yet twenty-one and reckless withal. For be it known that infants are liable to be sued for medical attendance, whether living in their parents' house or not.

MISTRESS: "What did you do with that old brown dress that hung in my closet?"

Domestic: "You told me to get rid of all the rags, and so I gave it to the ragman."

Mistress: "Goodness me! How do you suppose I am ever to get any new clothes if I haven't an old dress to put on when my husband comes home?"

AN Irishman stopped at an hotel where pretty high bills were charged. In the morning the landlord made out the amount of "damage," and presented it to Pat. After he had glanced over it, the latter looked the landlord in the face, and exclaimed:

"Ye put me in mind of a snipe."

"Why?" asked the landlord.

"Bekase ye're very nigh all bill."

MISS MURRAY: "Have you seen a lost dog, little boy?"

Patsy: "Was he a one-eyed bulldog?"

Miss Murray: "Mercy, no! Peepie was a dear little curly—"

Patsy (solemnly): "Don't say any more, ma'am. Your dog is done for. The one-eyed dog outclassed him an' won the fight han's down."

THE editor of THE LOUISVILLE ARGUS is a genius. He proclaims it in an editorial.

"We have struck a new scheme," he says. "On the green shade we wear over our eyes when reading proofs or grinding out copy, we have printed: 'I am very busy.' When a man that we don't care to talk to comes in we stoop still lower over the desk, so that he can see it and take the hint; but when the other kind of a man, a good fellow, comes in, we push the shade up over our bald spot, where he can't read the legend, smile benignly at him, and open the conversation by asking him for a cigar."

STEWARDS ON SHIPBOARD.

THE comfort of passengers on board ship depends almost entirely on the stewards. And so in these days, when everybody goes to sea, it is interesting to know something about them and their lives.

Stewards generally begin life either as cabin or scullery boys. The cabin boy is the captain's "tiger," the scullery boy waits on the ship's cook. It matters not which channel they choose to enter the service by, for both, when they outlive the modesty which enabled them to accept boy's wages from the Company, blossom out into what is called a waiter on shore, and, for some reason best known to seamen, a steward on board ship.

At the head of the large army of stewards to be found on board, say an Atlantic liner, is one called the chief. He is responsible to the Company for the entire management of his department, and exclusively issues and controls the daily bill of fare for every class of passenger and every "mess" on board. However, the man who really works the ship as far as the steward's department is concerned is the second steward, and it behoves a passenger to be on the best of terms with this important individual.

Besides selecting the stewards and assigning them their several duties, this officer is responsible to his chief for the cleanliness of the ship and for seeing that everything is done exactly as it ought to be done. Furthermore, it falls to his lot to place the passengers at the dining-table, a most thankless task, which requires endless tact and boundless good-temper.

Under him are the saloon steward and the bedroom steward. The former is really head-waiter and looks after his underlings. The latter is head-chambermaid, valet, nurse, and goodness knows what else besides. For one thing, his men have to do most of the scrubbing and washing-up after meals. Nor must the deck steward and the smoking-room steward be forgotten.

Of all these the wages are small because the tips are big.

The pantrymen, whose share of gratuities is not large, make a little extra money in an underhand way. It is a rule with all the companies that no food is allowed to be put on the table twice. Now for private reasons a great many people are too much upset at the sight of a rich dish even to put their forks into it, and whether it is touched or untouched the pantryman is supposed to throw it overboard. But he does nothing of the kind. He waits his time, and he sells it to the highest bidder among the steerage passengers.

Taking it all round the steward's life is a very hard one. On the voyage they work eighteen hours a day, and in port they are actively and continuously employed in cleaning up the ship and taking in stores for the next voyage, no inconsiderable item, as was recently shown in P. W.

The pay of the steward amounts on an average to three pounds a month, out of which he has to find two or three good suits of uniform, a large supply of linen, and to pay for his washing. Moreover, he has to pay for his living on shore, and if he is married, keep up his home and maintain his family.

In this way the company make the passengers practically pay for their servants, for abolish the fee system, and the steward could not live.

The tips, of course, vary very considerably. But, generally speaking, each bedroom steward and each saloon steward get two pounds from every family they minister to, and half a sovereign from every single passenger.

The best berths are on Australian liners, and it is disgraceful to learn that many men are forced by their masters to pay a bonus for a position on one of these ships. However, they can well afford this, as the tips often amount to £70 or £80 a trip. It is the principle of the thing that is wrong.

It is quite time a determined stand was made against this sort of thing. Neptune's guardian angels are indispensable to the passengers, but that is no sort of reason why they should pay for them out of their private pockets whether they feel inclined to or not; for no one with any self-respect could, under existing circumstances, leave a "liner" without having bestowed gratuities on his stewards.

THE world's fair will be held this winter in the same old way—on the knees.

THE for putting the : has, gain. And the man who is asked to go for the fuel — off to the cellar with the usual!!!

FIVE MORE INSURANCE CLAIMS PAID.

MR. A. WILSON, 56, Clerk Street, Edinburgh. Leg broken. Football. December 2nd.

MR. A. E. CHIVERTON, 13, Shooter's Hill, West Cowes, I.W. Collar-bone broken. Football. November 25th.

MR. G. FEATHERS, 40, Great St. Andrew Street, Bloomsbury, W.C. Collar-bone broken. Cycling. November 21st.

MR. H. SWALLOW, 7, Burgess Terrace, Coral Lane, Chelmsford. Collar-bone broken. Football. December 2nd.

MR. J. MEADOWS, 20, Heneage Street, Bloomsbury, Birmingham. Arm broken. November 25th.

Each had a signed coupon at the time of accident, and the Ocean Company have forwarded each a cheque for £5.

SOMETHING NEW AND
STRANGE.

AFTER the death of a noted local Swedish cyclist the other day, his body was placed on a black tri-cycle, heavily doped, and escorted by three bicyclists on each side of this strange hearse. Behind came his five daughters and three sons mounted on tandem, all of them blowing a requiem on their horns.

EXPERIMENTERS are now being carried out with a view to ascertain the benefits to be derived from firing diamonds on the sights of sporting rifles. Quickness of aim is everything in this kind of shooting, and the presence of the two brilliant results in the eye drawing a bead on the quarry without hesitation.

HEAVY attacks against a beleaguered city are to be expected in the next war by a sort of bottled sunshine. Great bombs are fired from mortars against the highest towers of the town, and, when they strike, a big mass of luminosity, of 100,000 candle power, spreads over the stone-work and lights up the faces of the defenders.

A NEW departure in the education of daughters of gentlemen has been made by the proprietress of a girl's school in Yorkshire. In the playground is a disguised private thoroughfare, and at certain times during the week the young ladies pass in single file through the vehicle, taking lessons in the delicate art of how to enter and alight from a carriage in the proper style.

THE German Navigation Society of Hamburg has recently tested a beacon which, as regards penetrating power, quite outshines the electric light. It is produced by mingling benzine gas with fine magnesium powder, such as is used by photographers in flash lamps, and the resulting flare is capable of piercing a fog to a considerable distance, which, as everyone knows, electricity fails to do.

IN view of the ravages which influenza is working just now amongst all classes, the advent of a cigarette impregnated with eucalyptus oil should be welcomed by smokers in general. The disinfectant, which is put on the market by Deutscher Antiseptische Tabac Company, of Old Court House, Berlin, is not confined to cigarettes, but is extended to the fragrant weed in every shape and form.

IN Hungary, where the new system of payment for railway fares has found such favour, a new plan of railway tickets has been introduced. The Government sell railway stamps, and supply gratis blank cards to anybody who wants them. The passenger simply writes down the name of the station from which he starts and that of his destination, and affixes stamps to the value of the advertised fares.

AN aesthetic baker bailing from Paris has made a contract with one of the lesser theatres for the supply of programmes made out of sweet pastry, bearing the lettering in chocolate. If he went one more, and steeped the programmes in whisky, it would probably save a lot of inconvenience to the unfortunate gentlemen who are continually being introduced by having to pop out and "see a friend" between the acts.

AMERICA has exceeded herself by the publication in Minnesota of a daily paper without a name. And France can boast of an enterprising fellow who, in starting a new journal, offered two and a half acres of land in Algeria to every subscriber; although the gift is rather scraped off the gingerbread when it is known that the ground is nothing more or less than a stretch of unsuitable barren desert on the borders of the great Sahara.

ITALY can produce wonderful examples of the skill of her people in the making of mosaic ornaments, and she has lately added to their number a beautiful picture called "Sunset," built of 115,000 pieces of forty different sorts of wood. I hear from a friend who recently saw this masterpiece that the soft gradation of the rich colours that always go to make the Italian sunset what it is, are so realistic, and the slices of wood so beautifully fitted together, that at a distance of a couple of yards you cannot tell whether the work is a painting or mosaic.

THE difficulties that attend the search for a vessel which has sunk in deep water are to be mitigated by an invention that will indicate the exact position of the wreck. A hollow ball is fastened by a soluble glue to some part of the wreck, and when the ship goes down the action of the water dissolves the joint and thus loosens the ball, which rises to the surface, untrailing a length of cord or wire as it moves. The glue is so protected that it is necessary for the joint to be submerged not less than twenty-four hours before it dissolves and sets free the ball.

AMONG a certain class of American saloon-keepers it is the usual thing to provide dice-boxes, so that their customers may indulge in the elevating pastime of tossing for drinks. Now, to avoid all unnecessary physical exertion, and to encourage this recreation, several enterprising saloon proprietors have rigged up electric dice-boxes, consisting of glass bulbs fixed to the counter, containing dice, which, when a spring is pressed, will jump up, turn over several times, and fall in the orthodox way. Then the pressure of another button indicates to the bar-tender the sort of drink required, so that the fine art of tipping is reduced to pressing buttons and drinking.

Under the above heading we publish accounts of new and curious inventions and discoveries. Should any readers have something exceptional of the kind which they would like to communicate to the world at large, we shall be very glad if they will make this the medium for doing so.

If any reader of PEARSON'S WEEKLY wishes to communicate with an expert regarding an idea for a patent let him write to the Editor of this paper, marking the envelope PATENT. The letter will be handed to a gentleman well known in connection with patents, who will put himself in communication with its sender.

ALL SORTS AND CONDITIONS
OF MEN.

KANSAS has four cities in which the vote of the women is larger than that of the men.

MR. H. M. STANLEY has told an interviewer that his Christmases have been rarely happy. He has spent fifteen Christmas days in the wilds of Africa.

AMONG the curious customs of Royalty must be numbered the total absence of water from the dinner tables of all members of the reigning house in this country. Even finger-bowls are excluded.

ANOTHER use has been found for electricity. In Ceylon experiments have shown that it is more economical to dry tea leaves by its agency than by the old method, and extensive plants have been erected for that purpose.

THE Lady Mayores of York is the only mayoress in England who wears an official chain. At the beginning of the seventeenth century a chain was presented to the then lady mayores, and it has been handed down ever since.

THE Comtesse de Narasol, Miss Etta Hughes, and Fraulein Paula, who are respectively the Spanish, English, and Austrian governesses of the Infantas of Spain, receive salaries equal to £1,000 a year a-piece, and a home in the Royal Household.

MOST people would imagine that Mr. Jan Van Beers was a very vivacious man. This is not the case. The popular artist's manner is very quiet to a degree, he talks very little, and his whole bearing is full of repose. When standing he nearly always leans up against a table or any adjacent piece of furniture. At a first glance you would think you saw a very lazy man, and not one of the most active men in Paris.

SIR WILLIAM CUNLIFFE BROOKE, the well-known banker and most hospitable host, has a great mania for collecting quotations. The billiard-table at his Highland seat, Glen Kana, in Aberdeenshire, is inlaid with quotations appropriate to the game, such as "From this I take my cue," etc. Even upon the moors, in quite the wildest parts, visitors are constantly surprised by coming across different quotations cut into the stones.

M. BOURGET, the French novelist, adopts a peculiar method in writing his novels. After outlining his story, he proceeds to create the characters whose mental and moral development he purposes analysing. He prepares separate and complete lives of each in detail, and then proceeds to write the story, turning it off at great speed. After this first writing he copies it twice, with numerous alterations. B. Bourget is a Christian, looks much like an Englishman, and has an erect figure and quick step that suggests the athlete.

WHEN the Sultan of Turkey desired to be invested with the Order of the Garter a peculiar difficulty arose—not the opposition of English dignitaries, but a Mohammedan law which forbade the person of that ruler to be touched, whereas the Garter must be buckled on below the left knee of each recipient. The Sultan's long robes further complicated the situation. At last, after a weighty deliberation, it was settled that a vertical slit should be made through the Sultan's draperies, through which his knee could be thrust, and in this way, by executing due care, the Garter was safely and lawfully fastened round the Sultan's calf.

MR. JOHN WILLIAM MACLURE, the present M.P. for the Stretford Division of Manchester, and his brother, Dr. MacLure, who was Dean of the Cathedral of that city, were one evening present at a reception in Arlington Street, at the house of the Marquis of Salisbury. A guest happened to say to Dr. MacLure:

"How like you are to your brother John William."

The doctor, who prided himself on his intellectual appearance, said:

"Oh, indeed; I suppose there is a sort of family likeness."

The gentleman rejoined:

"I don't mean that sort of resemblance. There are only two armchairs in the room, and you and your brother have somehow got both."

It appears to have escaped notice that the number of widowed and single duchesses at the present moment is altogether phenomenal. There are only twenty-seven dukes in the British peerage, not counting in, of course, those of Royal blood. Nineteen dowager-duchesses, then, would seem to be an exceptionally large proportion. They are as follows:—

- | | |
|-------------------|------------------|
| 2 Bedford. | 1 Wellington |
| 1 Grafton. | 1 Athole. |
| 2 Manchester. | 1 Buccleuch. |
| 2 Marlborough. | 2 Roxburgh. |
| 1 Newcastle. | 1 Leinster. |
| 1 Northumberland. | 1 Abercorn. |
| 1 Sutherland. | 1 Buckingham and |
| 1 Cleveland. | Chandos. |

This raises the curious question, why does a duchess live longer than a duke?

MR. SILAS K. HOOKING, whose novels sell to the extent of 80,000 a year—the aggregate sale being now close upon a million—has been interviewed by Mr. Frederick A. Atkins. It seems that we owe all his stories to a shower of rain. "When I was a minister at Burnley," says Mr. Hooking, "I was going out one day for a walk when the rain suddenly descended in such a dismal fashion that I returned to my study. I found some old sprouts plans on the table, and just to pass the time I cut them into strips, and on the blank sides began to scribble some curious stories I had heard from an old seafaring uncle of mine. The thing grew upon me. I became interested, and when I had finished twenty chapters I mentioned the fact casually to a local editor. He asked me for the MSS., and thus, sixteen years ago, my first story, 'Also Green,' appeared in print. It was afterwards issued in book form by Messrs. Wards and Co., who have been my publishers ever since. I followed on with 'Her Beauty,' which has had a sale of 80,000 copies."

FOOTBALL NOTES.

A GREAT deal has been heard about Tom Brandon lately, and he seemed a few weeks ago likely to be the subject of a big row amongst the League clubs. Differences have, however, been amicably settled, and Brandon is once more one of the redoubtable Blackburn Rovers.

Tom Brandon is a very fine back, and in that position he played for the Blackburn Rovers several years ago. The "voice of the charmer," acting on behalf of Sheffield Wednesday, persuaded him a season or so ago to transfer his allegiance to the latter club. But "to one thing constant never," unless it were the "main chance," Brandon was this season anxious to go back to his old love, and the Rovers were equally anxious to get him. The League regulations are rather peculiar, and the Blackburn Club had to pay pretty heavily for their darling.

This handing over of hard cash by one club to another in payment for the transfer of a player savours very much of slavery; but so it is, and as the men themselves do not appear to object much to being bought and sold, I suppose there is nothing very dreadful about it except the sound.

C. M. WELLS, to whom reference has before been made, is one of the brilliant all-round men, and is in the first flight as a player of both cricket and football.

He is just now England's greatest half-back; but it is not an exaggeration to say that he might just as likely have been playing as a full back, or a three-quarter, had his services been required in either of those positions. At Dulwich College he was a forward; so at Cambridge when he first played for the team. But a back was badly wanted; Wells was played there, and distinguished himself, getting his Blue. For Trinity, and occasionally for the 'Varsity, he figured as a centre-three-quarter, and proved himself fully capable for that difficult position. Finally, he was tried at half-back, and there displayed such smartness in getting the ball, such excellent judgment in passing, and such general all-round ability for the post, that he was quickly recognised as one of the best halves of the day. His appearances in first-class company this season have been few, yet he has for the second time gained International honours. Wells is a master at Eton, and is twenty-two years of age.

BY common consent H. Bradshaw, of Bramley, is admitted to be one of the finest forwards of the day at the Rugby game. As proof of this may be taken the fact of his selection again this year to play for England, although unable to take his place in the North and South match, the final trial for the International game.

Bradshaw is one of the thorough-going Yorkshire type of forwards. Exceptionally powerful, he uses his strength with skill and effect in the scrummages, and never flags from beginning to end of the toughest match. This will be his third year as an International player, yet he has never figured in a North and South match, quite an unusual experience. In his first season, though doing good work for Yorkshire all through, he was not selected until after his county, the Champions, defeated the Rest of England, when he was given a place against Scotland. Last year he played against Wales as first reserve, taking the place of Allport, a player of very similar style.

There is no great amount of showiness about Bradshaw's play, but he may always be depended upon to do the right thing, and he is not an infrequent scorer.

WILLIE NEILSON, the Cambridge Rugby Captain, had the misfortune of playing on the beaten side, in the great struggle between the rival Blues, a week or so back, and therefore did not get those opportunities of displaying his grand scoring abilities which might otherwise have fallen to his share. Yet, he did a vast amount of work of a defensive kind. Neilson is probably the very youngest of the immortals—or internationals, much the same thing to the footballer! He is now only twenty, yet, four years ago he played at three-quarter—they call it half still up there—for Scotland. At that time, he was captain of Marchionet School. At Cambridge, his Blue came as a matter of course. He saw his side successful in his first encounter with Oxford; but last year, a drawn game was played, and this year, the brilliant play of the Dark Blue halves, and the better combination of the three-quarters, gained Oxford the victory. Neilson, however, like the rest of the Cantabs, exhibited some very fine tackling.

Greater honours can scarcely fall to Willie Neilson's share; but, looking to his youth, there is good reason to suppose that his powers may still further develop, and his name bids fair to be headed down in conjunction with those of Don Wauchope, Stokes, and Stoddart, as among the giants of the game.

Football Players should also see Accident Insurance System on page 393.

£100 INSURANCE
FOR
FOOTBALL PLAYERS.

We undertake to pay ONE HUNDRED POUNDS to whomsoever the proprietors of PEARSON'S WEEKLY may decide to be the next of kin of any football player who meets with his death by an accident while actually playing football. The only condition is that the player in question must be the possessor of a copy of the current number of PEARSON'S WEEKLY, which must bear his usual signature in ink on the line left blank at the foot of this notice. The copy need not be upon the person at the time of the accident. Notice of accident must be given within three days, and death must have occurred within twenty-four hours of the accident.

Signed.....

Available until midnight, January 6th, 1894.

WORKERS AND THEIR WORK—No. CXI.

DOCTOR MOON,

THE BLIND LEADER OF THE BLIND.

EVERYBODY who has had anything to do with the blind is acquainted with Moon's System of Reading by means of embossed books. I ran down to Brighton the other day, and was shown over Dr. Moon's premises, where the greater part of the blind men's literature for the whole world is turned out. I was first welcomed by Miss Moon, a lady of middle age, who is her father's right hand in carrying on the business.

She took me round the premises, which cover about a quarter of an acre, and explained to me the various processes. Dr. Moon's alphabet is embossed on large oblong sheets of very thick paper, so that the blind may readily recognise the letters as they pass their hands along the line.

The books are prepared in two ways. The simplest way is by laying wire letters on sheets of tin. I saw an old woman, who had been at this work for forty-six years. She had reels of tin wire and a number of nippers, each one of which punched out a different letter, or rather four different letters, for the same figure has a different significance according to the four directions in which it may be pointed.

The old woman began by spreading some sticky stuff on to the plates. It was all done in the most primitive manner. She had a cracked cup full of sticky stuff, and the end of a quill with which to lay it on. When she had laid the letters on in their proper order, very deliberately, with careful consultation of the book or manuscript beside her, she took the finished plate to a rude gas lamp, which had the effect in a very few minutes of soldering the letters to the plate.

The plate was then taken to a sink and carefully scrubbed with a nail-brush and some soap. Then the old woman wrapped her knitted cape of violet wool round her shoulders and trotted off with the plate to another room, where two men were in charge of an engine. One plate and one sheet of paper were put into the engine at a time and banged together, with the result that the paper received its proper impression. It then only remained to bind the sheets together into books, which was also done on the premises. To show me how it was done, the old woman arranged my name in tin letters and went through the whole process, with the result that I am now the possessor of six visiting cards, which I shall leave on the next blind persons that I call upon.

The other process of preparing the plates is by electrotyping. In that way they last longer, but are more expensive to produce.

Everything is done in a quiet, primitive, old-world way, but by patiently working away all the year round for nearly half a century, a great deal has been accomplished. The first room I saw contained some fifty thousand stereotypes, all neatly stowed away in pigeon-holes.

In the next room sheets were being embossed at the rate of five hundred an hour. The men were at work upon a dictionary of the English language which Dr. Moon has compiled for the use of the blind. The chief difficulty about this form of printing is that it makes such bulky volumes. The dictionary, for instance, cannot be compressed into less than ten volumes. Dr. Moon has been at work upon it for two years and a half; he has now reached the letter S, and is very thankful to be so near the end. It has been a great strain upon him, but nothing of the kind has ever been attempted before, and it ought to be greatly welcomed by the blind.

In the next room the "Pilgrim's Progress" was being stereotyped in Hindustanee. A gutta-percha mould was poured over the face of the type and put to soak in an acid.

Beyond this room my old friend in the violet cape was plodding away at the Gospel in Welsh. She was not, however, to go on with this for many days, as a number of Christmas cards for the blind would shortly command her whole attention.

I was then taken into the binding-room and shown two or three plays—"The Tempest," "The Merchant of Venice," etc., which were being bound.

"My father does not hold much with printing that kind of secular work," Miss Moon said, "but people come to us and offer to pay for it entirely, and, if we refuse, they say we are narrow-minded and prejudiced, so sometimes we have to give way."

I gathered from what was shown me that Dr. Moon's printing press was intended in the first place for missionary and proselytising work. The greatest effort is directed towards the production of the Bible in all sorts of languages, and the great bulk of the books deal either with religion or—what is not precisely the same thing—controversial theology. Dr. Moon complains of the restrictions put upon his efforts by want of time and money, and one is tempted to suggest that both might be saved without anyone being a whit the worse off if he discontinued the publication of his less useful books and maps—say those about the Millennium.

For instance, he showed me a most elaborate embossed

chart, which he told me was mapped out exactly as the country will be at the time of the millennium. However, I suppose that a man, who has done so much as Dr. Moon has for the blind, must not be grudged an occasional indulgence of his hobbies.

Dr. Moon is a delightful little old man, who might have stepped directly out of one of Dickens' novels. He wears a frock-coat with a velvet collar, a tiny black cravat, and a very low waistcoat, displaying an abundant shirt-front such as would have delighted Mr. Pickwick. He is now seventy-five years of age, and has been blind ever since he was twenty-one, but he takes as lively an interest in everything that goes on, and seems as well acquainted as anybody with the things that ordinary people see. And there is nothing he enjoys so much as securing an attentive listener.

"How did you come to take up this work?" I asked.

"There had been a number of endeavours to produce a satisfactory type for the blind before my day," he replied. "In the sixteenth century an attempt was made to engrave on blocks of wood; but it failed because the letters were sunk in, instead of being embossed. In 1640 moveable leaden type was cast for the blind, and later on, in Germany, letters were cut out of cardboard."

"In 1784 embossed paper was used for the first time. In 1821 Lady Elizabeth Lowther brought some books on this principle from Paris, for the use of her son, Sir Charles Lowther, whose bust you may see there in the corner of the room. She also procured types, by means of which he might emboss other books. He now possesses a full library of works embossed with my type. He may be considered the first to read and print embossed books in this country."

"When I became blind in 1839, there were four embossed systems—the phonetic, the shorthand, the ordinary Roman letters, and another in which the letters were formed by angles. I tried to teach a blind boy to read by one of these systems, but it was quite hopeless. His hands were too much hardened by work for him to be able to distinguish the type. I realised that greater simplicity was necessary. So I made it a matter of prayer for the space of five years. In answer to my prayer, I was enabled to find out my present system. I experimented with it upon the boy I had failed to teach, and in ten days he could read easily."

"The next obstacle in the way of propagating my system was the expense. So I made that a matter of prayer, too, and after a couple of years subscriptions began to come in. From that time to this, the little stream has never ceased to flow."

I then asked Dr. Moon to explain his alphabet.

"My plan was to keep the ordinary spelling to its full extent and to use very simple characters for the alphabet. It consists of eight of the Roman letters untouched, fourteen others with parts left out, and only five new and very simple characters. I have adapted my system to four hundred and twenty languages and dialects, in which I have printed portions of the Word of God."

"You must be a very great linguist, Dr. Moon, to have accomplished so much."

"Oh, I don't pretend to speak all those languages fluently. All I have done is to learn the different alphabets. Then I have adapted the various letters in the various alphabets to the signs in my own alphabet."

"But many foreign alphabets have a great many more letters than the Roman alphabet. What do you do then? Take the Russian alphabet, for instance."

"Oh, then I have to devise a few extra signs, which I make as simple as possible. For instance, the Canarese alphabet contains forty-nine letters, for which I have devised forty-nine signs."

"And in the case of Oriental languages, do you make them read from right to left, as they naturally would do?"

"Yes, I do for the first line. But all my readers have to read both ways. They go along one line, say from left to right, and at the end of it they find a kind of bracket which leads them to the next line, along which they have to travel from right to left. Oddly enough, I learnt the other day that this was the way the Hittites used to read and write. It is a good way, for it not only enables you to read a great deal quicker, but prevents any risk of losing your place."

"How quickly should you say a good blind reader could read?"

"I calculate about thirty thousand characters an hour."

"That must be pretty quick reading," I remarked, trying to calculate rapidly how many words that would mean.

"About this pace, I should say," said Dr. Moon, taking down a blind man's Testament, and reading aloud at a leisurely but easy and confident pace. "An ordinary person, with the use of his eyes, can read to himself about ninety thousand characters in an hour."

"Do you suppose a person who is not blind could read with your characters?" I asked.

"Yes, indeed I do," Dr. Moon replied with a merry laugh. "A lady who was here the other day learned in five minutes."

"I suppose you can read it very easily?" I said, turning to Miss Moon, who replied, "Ha, ha, ha!" just as if I had asked a duck whether it could swim.

I said I had had an idea that the sense of touch was so much more acutely developed with blind people that they could feel things more easily than other people.

Dr. Moon explained that he had thought I was asking

about reading by the use of the eyesight. But, he added, his characters were so simple that there would be no difficulty for anybody in learning to use them very quickly.

"Of course the lighter the touch the better," he said. "All our show readers touch the letters very delicately. But I have known people learn to read with their fingers in order to read the Bible during sleepless nights. Lord Hatherley learned my system in two hours. In fact, it is so simple that tiny children can learn it easily. I have heard a blind child of three read quite nicely, and I have heard of another aged two who could also read with ease."

"I have adapted my system to a number of other subjects besides reading. Here, for instance, is a page of Euclid, and I have brought out the first two books with raised diagrams. Then I have dealt with astronomy on a large scale. Here is an explanation of the solar system, and here is a diagram of what happens at an eclipse."

"Then here are lessons on the stars," he went on, pointing to very elaborate maps of the heavens. "They place the blind exactly in the position of clear-sighted people. Here is a comet," he went on, touching a thing exactly like a flower-stalk. "This is the comet of 1811, and here is Donati's comet of 1852. This is a picture of York Minster, and here are various animals. This cock seems to be crowing very lustily, doesn't he? Here you have a dog."

"Do you find that blind people can make out these pictures without having them explained to them?" I asked.

"Those who have once seen," he replied, "are able to do so, but those who have never seen sometimes have strange ideas of things. For instance, I knew a little girl who thought that a cow always walked about on its hind legs, and used the other two as hands."

"Oh, what is that curious pattern?" I asked, pointing to a page in the book of specimens with a number of little dots arranged in squares.

"That," he replied, rapidly passing his fingers over the page, "is the march of the children of Israel through the desert. You see they are all arrayed according to their tribes. There is the Ark of the Covenant; that is God; that is Issachar, and so on. Of course I don't mean to say that the formation of the tribes was quite so regular as it is laid down here, but the order of the march is absolutely correct."

"Your books seem very expensive," I said, taking up a catalogue, and remarking that the Bible could not be bought for less than £10.

"Well," he replied, "that can't be helped. We sell everything under cost price, and it is impossible to turn out anything cheaper or less bulky. But you see we have not been idle," he continued, pointing to the catalogue. "We have not got a bad amount of poetry, and there are tales and anecdotes and memoirs. Here is a biography of Martin Luther, and here are Queen Victoria's Journals in the Highlands. Then there are all those history books, grammars, reading books, and geographies with maps."

"And we have not neglected music," he went on. "I have devised a system of musical notation, which has been very successful. One dot stands for a quaver, two dots for a semiquaver, and so on."

Altogether I spent a very interesting couple of hours at Dr. Moon's establishment, and he assured me before I went away that he would at all times be very glad to show anybody interested in the subject all that there was to be seen.

191 INSURANCE CLAIMS HAVE BEEN PAID.

This Insurance holds good for any number of claims to the extent of £1,000—not for one only.

£1,000 COUPON TICKET.
specially guaranteed by the
**OCEAN ACCIDENT AND GUARANTEE
CORPORATION, LIMITED,**

40, 42, and 44, MOORGATE STREET, LONDON, E.C.

To whom Notice of Claims, under the following conditions, must be sent within seven days to the above address:

INSURANCE TICKET Applicable to passenger trains in Great Britain and Ireland.

Issued under Section 33 of the "Ocean Accident and Guarantee Company, Limited, Act," 1890.

ONE THOUSAND POUNDS

will be paid by the above Corporation to the legal representative of any person killed by an accident to the train in which the deceased was an ordinary ticket-bearing passenger (including holders of season and excursion tickets), and who, at the time of such accident, had in his, or her, possession, this coupon ticket or the paper in which it is, with his, or her, usual signature, written in ink or pencil on the space provided below, which is the essence of this contract. The paper may be lost at his, or her, place of abode, so long as the coupon is signed.

PROVIDED ALSO, that the said sum will be paid to the legal representative of such person injured should death result from such accident within three calendar months thereafter.

This Insurance holds good for the current week of issue only, and entitles the holder to the benefit of, and is subject to, the conditions of the "Ocean Accident and Guarantee Company, Limited, Act," 1890, Risks No. 2 & 3.

The purchase of this publication is admitted to be the payment of a Premium under Sec. 34 of the Act. A Print of the Act can be seen at the office of this Journal, or of the said Corporation. No return can be recovered on more than one Coupon Ticket of this paper in respect of the same risk.

Signature.....

Available from 6 p.m. of Friday, December 24th, 1893, until Midnight Saturday, January 6th, 1894. (See columns 3, page 255.)

What is at the Bottom of the Sea?—What does "Sailing Further than the Wind" mean?—Can Precious Stones be Made?—Do Men and Women Breathe Differently?—See January "Search Light," price 3d.

HOW TO AVOID PAYMENT OF
TOLL.

It is not so very long ago since there was a toll of one halfpenny for every one who crossed one of the bridges over the Seine in Paris. An old pensioner was stationed at the entrance to the bridge to collect the money. There was a certain agitation against this toll, and numerous tricks were employed to avoid payment.

One day a man noticed ten students who were just coming to the bridge, and he said to them:

"You walk across, and I'll see about getting you through gratis."

Then he came up to the pensioner's box, and, taking out a handful of coins, began counting the students out loud.

"There are nine," he said, after counting very deliberately.

"I beg your pardon," said the pensioner, "there are ten."

"No, no, I am sure there are nine."

And he proceeded to count them again, still more slowly than before. By the time he had finished, they had reached the other end of the bridge and were disappearing from view. Then he said to the pensioner:

"Yes, you are quite right. There are ten. But what is that to me? I don't know the people."

Then he quietly gave his halfpenny to the custodian and continued across the bridge with his hands in his pockets, humming a popular air.

THERE IS MONEY IN HORSES.

Horseflesh at £30,000 a head comes rather high, but Ormonde, the Derby winner, commanded such a price. In the ten years Ormonde ran under the colours of the Duke of Westminster the grand stallion won about £30,000. The Duke of Westminster then sold him to Señor José Bocan for £14,000, and all sporting England mourned when the unbeaten thoroughbred was carried away to the Argentine Republic.

Although Ormonde was said to be afflicted with roaring, English turfmen were so displeased with the loss of the noble animal that a syndicate raised nearly £20,000 for the purpose of ending the great horse's exile and restoring him to the English turf. An American, however, went to Argentina with £27,000 in his pocket and offered that princely sum for Ormonde.

This bid seemed away beyond competition, but California possessed a young millionaire named Macdonough, who offered £30,000 for a horse he had never seen, and secured the coveted prize.

Nearly eighteen years ago the Duke of Westminster paid £14,000 for Doncaster, grandsire of Ormonde, and it is interesting to note how the investment turned out. Doncaster won a fortune during his career, and then sired Bend Or, which captured the English Derby of 1880, and also made a fortune for his owner. Then Bend Or sired Ormonde, who won £30,000 for the Duke, and was afterwards sold for £14,000.

Orme, one of Ormonde's sons, has already taken into camp a small fortune, and is still in his heyday of usefulness. It is very apparent from this that the Duke fairly coined money on his original outlay of £14,000.

Among other high-priced horses were the £13,000 Blair Athol, £8,000 Priam, the £8,000 Flying Dutchman, the £9,000 Isomony, and the £10,000 Malton.

Common, winner of the Derby and St. Leger of 1891, was sold to Sir Blundell Maple for £15,000.

101 INSURANCE CLAIMS HAVE BEEN PAID.

INSURANCE AGAINST GENERAL
ACCIDENTS

ACCORDING TO CONDITIONS GIVEN BELOW.

Specially guaranteed by the

OCEAN ACCIDENT ASSURANCE CORPORATION, Limited.

£25 INSURANCE COUPON. £10

£25 will be paid by the above Corporation to the Legal Representative of any person killed by an accident to the train, steamboat, tramway, omnibus, or other public conveyance in which he or she was travelling as a passenger, or while walking on any street or public road within the United Kingdom as a private individual, should death result within one month after such injury, and the amount will be paid should such injury not prove fatal, but result in the complete and irreparable loss of sight in both eyes, or the loss by actual separation of two legs, two arms, or a leg and an arm.

£10 will be paid should such injury only result in the loss as above defined of sight in one eye, or the loss of one arm or one leg, and £5 will be paid should such injury only result in the fracture of an arm or leg.

£5 will be paid to any person who shall sustain a fracture of an arm or leg or a broken collar-bone while engaged in playing football, or while cycling.

Provided in all above cases that the person so killed or injured was the owner of this Insurance Coupon, with his or her usual signature written underneath, when the accident on which the claim is based occurred. The paper may be left at his or her place of abode so long as the coupon is signed.

This Insurance entitles the holder to the benefit of, and is subject to the conditions of the "Ocean Accident and Transportation Company, Limited," Act 1880, No. 2, 3, 4, and 5.

This Insurance is limited to One Coupon of this paper for each holder, and is not transferable to any Insurance with this or any other Accident Company, but is in addition thereto.

Notes of Claim must be made to Mr. G. ARTHUR FRANKSON, Henrietta Street, London, W.C., within seven days of the accident.

Signature

(See column 2, page 205.)

Available from 5 p.m. of Friday, December 29th, 1893, till midnight, Saturday, January 6th, 1894.

THE CRITICAL DAYS OF 1894.

DR. RUDOLF FAHL has been giving to the world his ideas concerning what is in store for us in the coming year. We may be inclined to pay but little attention to his remarks, but if we remember that his earthquake predictions have been very fairly accurate we shall perhaps be prepared to give respectful consideration to what he now says.

Dr. Fahl has been studying his subject for the past twenty-five years, and his observations have convinced him that the attraction of the moon and sun, which, in spite of its theoretic insignificance, is known to cause very high tides, has a similar effect upon the "ocean of air" (as he calls it), and upon the fluid and volatile masses in the interior of the earth.

He therefore declares that atmospheric disturbances, earthquakes, colliery explosions, and the like, are strikingly numerous on those days when the attractive power of both moon and sun is at its maximum; and he calls such days "critical"—firstly, because they represent a change in the equilibrium of the above-named masses; and, secondly, because they afford a basis for the calculation of the extent of the influence of that attraction.

Certain phenomena cause an increase in the attractive power of the sun and moon. The chief of these are the new and full moon; but the values of all are increased or decreased by circumstances which it is impossible to describe fully. Therefore the "critical days" all differ in importance. For the coming year the learned doctor gives us, in order of importance, a list of twenty-five days on which we may expect trouble, the figures affixed to each giving its relative value:—

30th August . . . 4.49	[15th September . . . 3.84]
[29th September . . . 4.45]	13th November . . . 3.84
20th February . . . 4.33	4th June . . . 3.80
[21st March . . . 4.28]	12th December . . . 3.71
1st August . . . 4.20	5th February . . . 3.51
[6th April . . . 4.16]	16th August . . . 3.47
21st January . . . 4.07	27th November . . . 3.43
5th May . . . 4.03	19th May . . . 3.35
28th October . . . 4.03	7th January . . . 3.02
7th March . . . 3.99	17th July . . . 3.02
14th October . . . 3.96	27th December . . . 2.98
20th April . . . 3.92	18th June . . . 2.85
3rd July . . . 3.84	

The dates enclosed in brackets are those on which eclipses occur. In ordinary calculation of the power of attraction no notice is taken of the effect of eclipses, but Dr. Fahl insists that the influence of an eclipse of the sun or moon is very considerable, and although he has placed those dates in the position which they would occupy under ordinary circumstances, he tells us that they will be more "critical" than the figures indicate. He points out that three of the most critical days are eclipse days, which means that we may look out for something disastrous on those occasions.

Dr. Fahl makes a general reservation with regard to the exact dates of his list. He repeats what he said some months ago that the occurrences which he predicts for a certain day may take place two days earlier in the case of serious disturbances, and two days later in other cases. He knows this, but he is unable in the present state of his knowledge to get nearer to the exact time.

No precise prediction is made as to what will occur on any of the "critical" days, but the German prophet regards them very seriously. In the way of atmospheric disturbances, we may expect cyclones, heavy rains, snowfalls, and hailstorms at unusual seasons or in unusual places, thunderstorms and snowstorms simultaneously in the same place, and the first thunderstorm in spring and the first snowfall in autumn will take place on a "critical" day.

What we have to expect in the way of earthquakes and colliery explosions the doctor does not inform us, but if there is anything in his theories, as he believes that these and the atmospheric disturbances are all connected, it would appear in the highest degree probable that disasters of this nature will visit us at least on the three important eclipse days, namely, March 21st, April 6th, and September 29th.

"But, Ethel, how do you know that this young man loves you? Has he told you so?"

Ethel: "Oh no, mamma! But if you could only see the way he looks at me when I am not looking at him?"

EDWIN: "What do you think of that artist who painted cobwebs on the ceiling so naturally that his housemaid broke her heart owing to her ceaseless and vain efforts to remove them?"

Angelina: "Well, there may have been such an artist, but there surely never was such a housemaid."

THE common opinion is that animals do not know enough to be superstitious. Here is a possible exception.

"I tell you what," said Mr. Watts, "I saw a remarkable exhibition of animal intelligence to-day!"

"What was that?" said Mr. Potts.

"Why, a bridal party started from the house across the street from where I live, and one of the horses threw a shoe."

GREAT TOWNS COMPETITION.

1,500 GUINEA ENGRAVINGS TO BE
GIVEN AWAY.

No. 28.

SPECIAL OFFER TO THE INHABITANTS OF SWANSEA, TYNMOUTH (N. SHIELDS), WALSALE, WALTON (LANCS.), WARRINGTON, AND WEST BROMWICH.

As announced in previous issues we have devised a form of competition which, instead of being open to readers all over the kingdom, and thus, by the multitude of entries, affording individual competitors but a small chance of success, will be open to dwellers in particular towns only.

The prizes take the form of charming engravings, 20 by 30, handsomely framed in solid oak, of a kind that are sold in print-shops for a guinea apiece. The subjects have been carefully chosen for their artistic beauty, and in the case of each particular town the engravings will be on show somewhere while the competition is open.

For the purposes of this competition towns will be taken in alphabetical order. Every town containing at the last census 40,000 inhabitants or more in England will be admitted, and every town in Ireland, Scotland, and Wales, of 20,000 or more.

The pictures will be presented in the proportion of one to every ten thousand of population, that is to say, Aberdeen with its population of 121,000 secured twelve pictures.

The towns will be arranged so that about thirty pictures are given away every week. This week the competition is open to dwellers in Swansea, Tynemouth (N. Shields), Walsale, Walton (Lancs.), Warrington and West Bromwich.

Name of Town.	Population.	Pictures.
Swansea	90,428	9
Tynemouth	46,267	4
Walsale	71,791	7
Walton-on-the-Hill (Lancs.)	40,304	4
Warrington	52,742	5
West Bromwich	59,489	5

The pictures are on view in Swansea at Mr. W. M. Radford's, 69, Wind Street; in Tynemouth at Mr. T. J. Jennings', 94, Bedford Street, N. Shields; in Walsale at Messrs. J. & W. Griffin's, The Bridge; in Walton-on-the-Hill at Mr. H. R. Smith's, 64, Walton Road; in West Bromwich at Mr. W. Britten's, 245, High Street, and Mr. H. Newman-Elliott's, 3, Bull Street; and in Warrington at Mr. Lowe's, Golborne Street.

Competitors must be resident in one of the above towns, taking the widest recognised boundaries.

The competition will this week be on the following lines:—

Each competitor must copy out, on a sheet of paper, the following words:—

"I have great pleasure in recommending as a fit and proper person to receive one of the engravings offered as prizes in Pearson's Weekly."

In the blank space the competitor must fill in his own name, and he must also attach his full postal address to the document.

The engravings will be presented to those competitors who succeed in obtaining the greatest number of signatures to the above recommendation. A person may sign as many recommendations as he likes, and one competitor may, if he wish, attach his signature to another competitor's list.

Letters only. Please post early. To arrive at latest by first post Wednesday, January 3rd.

Each attempt must be accompanied with the coupon at the top right-hand corner of front page of the wrapper of this issue, and no person must send more than one attempt.

NEXT WEEK'S PRIZES WILL BE FOR THE INHABITANTS OF WEST HARTLEPOOL, WIGAN, WOLVERHAMPTON, WORCESTER, WATERFORD, YORK, AND GREAT YARMOUTH.

After the large towns are exhausted, competitions will be held for which dwellers in small towns and villages alone are eligible.

RESULT OF GREAT TOWNS COMPETITION.

No. 26.

A handsomely-framed Guinea Etching has been awarded to each of the following persons:—

IN SOUTHPORT:—William Dunstan, 132, Bisham Road, High Park; James Barton, 5, Sussex Road; Alfred Cotton, 22, Belmont Street; Joseph Smith, 5, Jackson's Grove.

IN SOUTHAMPTON:—George Simpson, 140, Adelaide Road, St. Denys; Mrs. F. E. Young, 53, Avenue Road; C. Spicer, 15, Haxton Road, Nicholas Town; William Eburn, 53, St. Andrew's Road; William Laird, 5, St. Andrew's Road; Leo Hammond, 184, Milton Road, Fitzburgh.

IN SALFORD:—C. Mather, 7, Heath Street, Lower Broughton; Fred Plant, 12, Saxby Street, Irlams Height; William Greer, 51, George Henry Street, Beales New Road; A. H. Jozal, 17, Douglas Avenue, Trafford Road; O. W. Goodbrand, 21, Henrietta Street, North Salford; Arthur Dant, 42, Enbridge Street; George Tunstall, Avondale, Weaste; W. Calvert, 34, Whit Lane, Pendleton; W. C. Jump, 3, Watson Street, Hough Lane, Lower Broughton; William Parry, 14, McKerrrow Street, Pendleton; J. W. Cain, 2, Mary Street, Pendleton; S. Fletcher, 33, Brundale Heath Road, Pendleton; W. Jones, Victoria Bridge; James Haggie, 274, Regent Road; Thomas Smith, 3, Dawson Street, Pendleton.

JEWELLER: "How do you like your alarm clock?"

Customer: "First-rate."

Jeweller: "You didn't seem pleased with it at first."

Customer: "No; but it's broken now."

THERE is nothing so tends to shorten the lives of old people, and to injure their health, as the practice of sitting up late, particularly on winter evenings. This is especially the case where there is a grown-up daughter in the family. We publish this item at the earnest request of several young men.

OLD Mr. Blenkinsop says his son is a very smart boy, and in proof of this avers that the following conversation took place lately:—

Blenkinsop: "Don't fret, my son; Father Christmas won't forget you."

Tommy Blenkinsop: "That's all right, dad; I ain't afraid he'll forget the tin whistle I asked for; but I can't help being a trifle nervous about his recollecting the bicycle and the watch and chain."

And, strange to say, the bicycle, watch, and chain were forgotten.

The competition for London begins the week after next. Residents in London, please note.

THE SYREN OF THE SKIES.

By GEORGE GRIFFITH.

Author of "The Angel of the Revolution."

SUMMARY.

THE Prologue, under the title of "The Prophecy of Natas," forms a connecting link between THE ANGEL OF THE REVOLUTION and THE SYREN OF THE SKIES. It consists of a document left behind him by Natas, the Master of the Terror, in which he recounts the events and the issues of the world-war of 1901, and enjoins the Aerians, the descendants of the leaders of the Revolution, who have colonised Aeria—a mountain-walled valley in Central Africa, inaccessible by any other means than flight through the air—to rule the world as he and his companions have done for a hundred years from the date of his death, and then to leave the nations of the earth to their own devices. He also foretells the possibility of a catastrophe which, in the fifth generation from his own time, may overwhelm the world and involve the whole human race in destruction.

The story opens with the surrender of the world-throne in the year 1930 by the Supreme Council of Aeria in obedience to the command of Natas. This takes place in St. Paul's Cathedral, where the Supreme Council was first constituted a hundred and twenty-five years before. Alan Arnold, the President, addresses the assembled rulers of the world and tells them that henceforth they and those over whom they rule are to take the freedom and responsibility of independence in all respects save one. The Aerians are determined to retain the exclusive command of the air, and those who dispute it with them must either subdue them or be destroyed by them. Among his auditors are two of the three remaining descendants of the house of Romanoff; these are Paul Romanoff and his granddaughter Olga. On the eve of the same day Paul Romanoff, knowing that this is to be the last night of his life, compels Olga to prepare him a draught which will give him sufficient strength to transmit to her and her cousin, Serge Nicholaivitch, that legacy of revenge on the Aerians which it is their joint destiny to work out. Just as Paul has drunk the draught, Serge is announced and enters the room.

CHAPTER III.

A LEGACY OF REVENGE.

THE old man, on whom the strange drug that he had taken was still exercising its wonderful effects, threw himself into an easy chair as he spoke and motioned them with his hand towards a second low couch against one of the walls, covered with cushions and draped with neutral-tinted silken hangings.

Olga, moving, as it seemed, with the unconscious motion of a somnambulist, allowed her form to sink back upon the cushions until she half sat and half reclined on them; and Serge, laying one of the cushions on the floor, sat at her feet, and drew one of her hands unresistingly over his shoulder and kept it there as though she were caressing him. Thus they waited for Paul Romanoff to teach them the lesson that they had sworn to teach in turn to the generations that were to come.

The old man regarded them in silence for a moment or two, and as he did so the angry fire died out of his eyes and his lips parted in a faint smile as he said, rather in soliloquy to himself than to them:

"As it was in the beginning it is now and for ever shall be until the end! Empires wax and wane, and dynasties rise and fall! Revolutions come and go, and the face of the world is changed, but the mystery of sex, the beauty of woman, and the love of man, endure changeless as Destiny, for they are Destiny itself!"

As he spoke the fixed, rigid look melted from Olga's face. The bright flush rose again to her cheeks, and she bowed her royal head, and looked almost tenderly at the blonde, ruddy young giant at her feet. After all he was her fate, and she might well have had a worse one.

He loved her with the blind worship that could see no faults. She had been given to him as part of her destiny. He had given himself to her long before, and his eyes had never looked love into any but hers. She would be his plaything, but he would be her slave. It was a fair exchange, and perhaps in time love would come to her as well, and she would have something more than hatred and revenge to live for.

As these thoughts flitted swiftly through her mind, Paul Romanoff began to speak, slowly and quietly, with his eyes fixed on the glittering symbol of the vanished sovereignty of his House, as though he were addressing it, and communing with the mournful memories that it recalled from the past.

"It is a hundred and twenty-five years since the hand of Natas the Jew came forth out of the unknown, and struck you from the brow of the Last of the Czars. On the day that Natas died I was born, a hundred years ago. There are barely a score of men left on earth who have seen and spoken with the men who saw the Great Revolt and the beginning of the Terror, and I alone, of the elder line of Romanoff, remain to pass the story of our House's shame and ruin on, so that it may not be forgotten against the day of vengeance that I have waited for in vain.

"But I have no time left for dreams or vain regrets. Listen, children of the present, and take my words with you into the future that it is not given to me to see."

He passed his hand upwards over his eyes and brow, and then went on, speaking now directly to Olga and Serge, in a quick, earnest tone, as though he feared that his fictitious strength would fail him before he could say what he had to say:

"When Alexander, the last of the crowned Emperors of Russia, fell down dead on the morning after he reached the mines of Kara, to which the Terrorists had exiled him as a convict for life, those who remained of his family, and who had taken no part in the war, were allowed to return to Europe on condition that they lived the lives of private citizens and sought no share in the government of any country to which they were allied by marriage or otherwise.

"Only two of those who had survived the march to Siberia were able to avail themselves of this permission, and these were Olga, the daughter of Alexander, and Serge Nicholaivitch, the youngest son of his nephew Nicholas. These two settled at the Court of Denmark, and there, two years later, Olga married Prince Ingeborg. Her first-born son, the only one of her children who lived beyond infancy, was my father, as my own first-born son was yours, Olga Romanoff.

"Serge married Dagmar, the youngest daughter of the House of Denmark, three years later, and from him you, Serge Nicholaivitch, are descended in the fourth generation. Thus in you will be united the only two remaining branches of the once mighty House of Romanoff. May the

day come when in you or your children its ancient glories shall be restored!"

"Amen!" said Olga and Serge, in a single breath, and as she uttered the words Olga's eyes fell on the lost crown upon the table, and for the moment they seemed to flame with the inner fires of a quenchless rage. Paul Romanoff's eyes answered her's flash for flash, for the same hatred and longing for revenge possessed them both—the old man who had carried the weight of a hundred years to the brink of the grave, and the young girl whose feet were still lingering on the dividing line between maidenhood and womanhood.

Then he went on, speaking with an added note of fierceness in his voice:

"From the day of my birth until this, the night of my death, it has been impossible to do anything to recover that which was lost in the Great Revolt. Not that stout hearts and keen brains and willing hands have been wanting for the work; but because the strong arm of the Terror has encircled the earth with unbreakable bonds; because its eye has never slept; and because its hand has hurled infallible destruction upon all who have dared to take the first step towards freedom.

"Natas spoke truly when he said that the Terrorists had ruled the world by force, and Alan Arnold to-day spoke truly after him when he said that the supremacy of the Aerians was based upon the force that they could bring to bear upon any who revolted against them through their possession of the empire of the air.

"It is this priceless possession that gives them the command of the world, and for a hundred years they have guarded it so jealously that they have slain without mercy all who have ventured to take even the first step towards an independent solution of the mighty problem which Richard Arnold solved a hundred and twenty-six years ago.

"The last man who died in this cause was my only son and your father, Olga. Remember that, for it is not the least item in the legacy of revenge that I bequeath to you to-night. He had devoted his life, as many others had done before him, to the task of discovering the secret of the motive power of the Terrorists' airships.

"The year you were born success had crowned the efforts of ten years of tireless labour. Working with the utmost secrecy in a lonely hut buried in the forests of Norway, he and six others, who were, as he thought, devoted to him and the glorious cause of wresting the empire of the world from the grasp of the Terrorists, had built an air-ship that would have been swifter and more powerful than any of their aerial fleet.

"Two days before she was ready to take the air one of his men deserted. The traitor was never seen again, but the next night a Terrorist vessel descended from the clouds, and in a few minutes not a vestige of our air-ship or her creators remained. Only a blackened waste in the midst of the forest was left to show the scene of their labours. Within forty-eight hours it was known all over the civilised world that Vladimir Romanoff and his associates had been killed by order of the Supreme Council for endeavouring to build an air-ship in defiance of its commands.

"Such are the enemies against whom you will have to contend. They are still virtually the masters of the world, and the task before you is to wrest that mastery from them. It is no light task, but it is not impossible, for these Aerians are, after all, but men and women as you are, and what they have done other men and women can surely do.

"The Great Secret cannot always remain theirs alone. While they actively controlled the nations nothing could be done against them, for their hand was everywhere and their eyes saw everything. But now they have abdicated the throne of the world and left the nations to rule themselves as they can. For a time things will go on in their present grooves, but that will not be for long.

"I, who am their bitterest enemy on earth, am forced to confess that the Terrorists have proved themselves to be the wisest as well as the strongest of despots. Under their rule the world has become a paradise—for the canaille and the multitude. But they have curbed the mob as well as the king, and abolished the demagogue as well as the despot. Now the strong hand is lifted and the bridle loosed, and before many years have passed the brute strength of the multitude will have begun to assert itself.

"The so-called kings of the earth, who rule now in a mockery of royalty, will speedily find that the real kings of the old days ruled because in the last resource they had armies and navies at their command and could enforce obedience. These are but the puppets of the popular will, and now that the moral and physical support of the Supreme Council and its aerial fleet is taken from them, they will see democracy run rampant, and, having no strength to stem the tide, they will have to float with it or be submerged by it.

"In another generation the voice of the majority, the blind brute force of numbers, will rule everything on earth. What government there may be will be a mere matter of counting heads. Individual freedom will by swift degrees vanish from the earth, and human society will become a huge machine grinding all men down to the same level until the monotony of life becomes unendurable.

"Hitherto all Democracies in the history of the world have been ended by military despotisms, but now military despotism has been made impossible, and so Democracy will run riot until it plunges the world into social chaos.

"This may come in your time or in your children's, but it is the opportunity for which you must work and wait. Even now you will find in every nation thousands of men and women who are chafing against the limitations imposed on individual aspiration and ambition, and as the rule of Democracy spreads and becomes heavier the number of these will increase until at last revolt will become possible, nay, inevitable.

"Of this revolt you must make yourselves the guiding spirits. The work will be long and arduous, but you have all your lives before you, and the reward of success will be glorious beyond all description.

"Not only will you restore the House of Romanoff to its ancient glories in yourselves and your children, but you will enthrone it in an even higher place than that which your ancestor had almost won for it when these thrice-cursed Terrorists turned the tide of battle against him on the threshold of the conquest of the world.

"Do not shrink from the task or despair because you are now only two against the world. Think of Natas and the mighty work that he did, and remember that he was once only one against the world which in the day of battle he fought and conquered.

"Above all things never let your eyes wander from the land of the Aerians. That once conquered and the world is yours to do with as you will. To do that you must first conquer the air as they have done. Aeria itself, by all reports, is such a paradise as the sun nowhere else shines upon. Some day, whether by force or cunning, it may be yours, and when it is the world also will be yours to be your footstool and your plaything, and all the peoples of the earth shall be your servants to do your bidding.

"Yes, I can see through the mists of the coming years, and beyond the grave that opens at my feet aerial navies flying the Eagle of Russia and scaling the mighty battlements of Aeria, hurling their lightnings far and wide in the work of vengeance long delayed! Behind the battle I see darkness that my weak eyes cannot pierce, but yours shall see clearly where mine are clouded with the falling mists of death!

"The shadows are closing round me and the sands in the glass are almost run out. Yet one thing remains to be done. Since Alexander Romanoff died at the mines of Kara no Czar of Russia has been crowned. Now I, Paul Romanoff, his rightful heir, will crown myself after the fashion of my ancestors, and then I will crown you, the daughter of my murdered son, and you shall place the diadem on your husband's brow when God has made you one!"

So saying the old man rose from his seat with his face flushed and his eyes aglow with the light of ecstasy. Olga and Serge rose to their feet, half in fear and half in wonder, as they looked upon his transfigured countenance.

He lifted the imperial crown from the table, and then, drawing himself up to the full height of his majestic stature, raised it high above his head, and then lowered it slowly down towards his brow.

The jewelled circlet of gold had almost touched the silver of his snowy hair when the light suddenly died out of his eyes, leaving the glaze of death behind it. He gasped once for breath, and then his mighty form shrank together and pitched forward in a huddled heap at their feet, flinging the crown with a dull crash to the floor, and sending it rolling away into a corner of the room.

"God grant that may not be an omen, Olga!" said Serge, covering his eyes with his hands to shut out the sudden horror of the sight.

"Omen or not, I will do his bidding to the end!" said the girl, slowly and solemnly. Then her pent-up passion of grief burst forth in a long, wailing cry, and she flung herself down on the prostrate form of the only friend she had ever known and loved, and laid her cheek upon his and let the welling tears run from her eyes over those that had for ever ceased to weep.

CHAPTER IV.

CZARINA OLGA.

THREE days after his death the body of Paul Romanoff was reduced to ashes in the Highgate Crematorium, a magnificent building in the sombre yet splendid architecture of ancient Egypt, which stood in the midst of what had once been Highgate Cemetery, and what was now a beautiful garden, shaded by noble trees, and in summer ablaze with myriads of flowers.

Not a grave or a headstone was to be seen, for burial in the earth had been abolished throughout the civilised world for nearly a century. In the vast galleries of the central building thousands of urns containing the ashes of the dead reposed in niches inscribed with the name and date of death, but these mostly belonged to the poorer classes, for the wealthy as a rule devoted a chamber in their own houses to this purpose.

The body was registered in the great Book of the Dead at the Crematorium as that of Paul Ivanitch, and the only two mourners signed their names "Serge Ivanitch and Olga Ivanitch, grandchildren of the deceased." The reason for this was that for more than a century the name of Romanoff had been proscribed in all the nations of Europe. It was believed that the Vladimir Romanoff who had been executed by the Supreme Council for attempting to solve the forbidden problem was the last of his race, and Paul had taken great pains not to disturb this belief.

Long before his son had met with his end he had called himself Paul Ivanitch, and settled in London and practised his profession as a sculptor, in which he had won both fame and fortune. Olga had lived with him since her father's death, and Serge, who at the time the narrative opens had just completed his studies at the Art University of Rome, had passed as her brother.

They took the urn containing the ashes of the old man back with them to the house, which now belonged with all its contents to Olga and Serge. On the morning after his death a notice, accompanied by an abstract of his will, had been inserted in THE OFFICIAL GAZETTE, the journal devoted exclusively to matters of law and government.

On the third day the succession tax had been paid and these simple formalities constituted a valid title to possession, which could only be disputed by an appeal to the Judicial Council, which would demand the clearest material evidence of higher claim before even calling upon the present possessor to justify their title.

This system of inheritance, which had been established on the abolition of private property in land in the first year of the Peace, had been found amply sufficient to protect the rights of individuals, since no one owned any property that he had not earned or inherited by will. Therefore, those who produced the authenticated will of a deceased person made in their favour were assumed to have a practically

indefinite right to the inheritance. It is almost needless to add to these necessary details that the right of primogeniture had been obtained with the private tenure of land, out of which it had arisen.

Paul Romanoff had, however, left two wills behind him, one which had to be made public in compliance with the law, and one which was intended only for the eyes of Olga and Serge. This second will reposed with the crown of Russia in the secret recesses in the wall of the octagonal chamber, and the instructions endorsed upon it stated that it was to be opened by Serge in the presence of Olga after they had brought his ashes back to the house and had been legally confirmed in their possession of his property.

Consequently, on the evening of the 11th, the two shut themselves into the room, and Olga, who since her grandfather's death had worn the key of the recess on a chain round her neck, unlocked the secret door and gave the will to Serge. As she did so a sudden fancy seized her. She took the crown from its resting place, and, standing in front of a long mirror which occupied one of the eight sides of the room from roof to floor, poised it above the flaming coils of her hair, with both hands, and said, half to Serge and half to herself:

"What are you and that accomplished youth shall do! By my own right, and with my own hands, I am crowned Czarina, Empress of the Russian in Europe and Asia. As the great Catherine was so will I be, and more, for I will be mistress of the West and the East. I will have kings for my vassals and satellites for my servants, and I will rule as no other woman has ruled before me since Semiramis!"

As she uttered the daring words whose fulfilment seemed beyond the dreams of the wildest imagination, she placed the crown upon her brow and stood, clothed in imperial purple from head to foot, the very incarnation of loveliness and royal majesty. Serge looked up as she spoke and gazed for a moment entranced upon her. Then he threw himself upon his knees before her, and raising the hem of her robe to his lips, said in a voice half choked with love and passion:

"And I who am also of the imperial blood, will be the first to salute you Czarina and mistress! You have taken me as your lover, let me also be the first of your subjects. I will serve you as women never was served before. You shall be my mistress, my goddess, and your words shall be my laws before all other laws. If you bid me do evil it shall be to me as good, and I will do it. I will kill or have alive according to your pleasure, and I will hold my own life as cheap as any other in your service, for I love you and my life is yours!"

Olga looked down upon him with the light of triumph in her eyes. No woman ever breathed to whom such words would not have been sweet; but to her they were doubly sweet because they were a spontaneous tribute to the power of her beauty and the strength of her royal nature, and an earnest of her future away over other men.

More than this, too, they had been won without an effort from the lips of the man whom she had always been taught to look upon as higher than other men in virtue of his descent from her own ancestry, and the blood-right that he shared with her to that throne which it was to be their joint life-task to re-establish.

If she did not love him it was rather because ambition and the inborn lust of power engrossed her whole being, than from any lack of worthiness on his part. Of all the men she had ever seen none compared with him in strength and manliness save one—and he, better beyond expression as the thought was to her, was so far above her as she was now that he seemed to belong to another world and to another order of beings.

As their eyes met a thrill that was almost akin to love passed through her soul, and, setting on the impulse of the moment, she took the crown from her own head and held it above his as he knelt at her feet, and said:

"Not as my subject or my servant, but as my co-ruler and helper you shall keep that oath of yours, Serge Nikolaevitch. We have exchanged our vows, and in a few days I shall be your wife. We will wed as equals, and so now I crown you, as it is my right to do. Rise, my lord the Czar, and take your crown!"

Serge put up his hands and took the crown from hers at the thought that she placed it on his brow. He rose to his feet, holding it to his heart as he said solemnly:

"So be it, and may the God of our fathers help me to wear it worthily with you, and to restore to it the glory that has been taken from it by our enemies!"

Then he laid it reverently down on the table and turned to Olga, who was still standing before the mirror looking at her own lovely image as though in a dream of future glory. He took her unresisting in his arms and kissed her passionately again and again, bringing the bright blood to her cheeks and the light of a kindred passion to her eyes, and murmuring between the kisses:

"But you, darling, are worth all the crowns of earth, and I am still your slave because your beauty and your sweetness make me so."

"Then slave you shall be!" she said, giving him back the crown, well knowing that with every pressure of her intoxicating lips she riveted the chains of his bondage closer upon his soul.

To an outside observer what had taken place would have seemed but little better than boy-and-girl's play, the phantasies of two young and ardent souls dreaming a romantic and impossible dream of power and glory that had vanished, never to be brought back again. And yet if such a one had been able to look forward through little more than a single instant, he would have seen that, in the mysterious revolutions of human affairs, it is usually the seemingly impossible that becomes possible, and the most unexpected that comes to pass.

Who would have believed in the last decade of the nineteenth century that within twenty years the whole world would have fallen under the domination of a band of revolutionaries; that monarchs should hold their thrones on sufferance from them; that war should become impossible;

and that the whole face of human society should be changed in a single generation?

And yet all that and more had come to pass, and men were already looking back through the gathering mists of the accumulating years, even as men look back upon the things of their childhood, wondering what the world was like before the days of the Terror, and speculating whether the present order of things, which seemed so splendid and so enduring, might not be as suddenly and as unexpectedly overwhelmed as had been that which had preceded it.

CHAPTER V.

A DANGEROUS DOCUMENT.

THE secret will of Paul Romanoff, to the study of which the two lovers addressed themselves when they awoke from the dream of love and empire into which Olga's phantasy had plunged them both, would, if it had been made public, have given a by no means indefinite shape to such vague dreams of world-revolution as were inspired in thoughtful minds, even in the thirty-first year of the twenty-first century.

It was a voluminous document of many pages, embodying the results of nearly eighty years of tireless scheming and patient research in the field of science as well as in that of politics. Paul Romanoff had lived his life with but one object, and that was to prepare the way for the accomplishment of a revolution which should culminate in the subversion of the state of society inaugurated by the Terrorists, and the re-establishment, at any rate in the east of Europe, of autocratic rule in the person of a scion of the house of Romanoff. All that he had been able to do towards the attainment of this seemingly impossible project was crystallised in the document bequeathed to Olga and Serge.

It was divided into three sections. The first of these was merely of a personal nature, and contained details which it would serve no purpose of use or interest to reproduce here. It will therefore suffice to say that it contained a list of the names and addresses of four hundred men and women scattered throughout Europe and America, each of whom was the descendant of some prince or noble, some great landowner or millionaire, who had suffered degradation or ruin at the hands of the Terrorists during the reorganisation of Society after the final triumph of the Anglo-Saxon Federation in 1904.

All the main facts of their family histories were minutely set forth, together with the reasons of their hostility to the present condition of things. They formed, in short, a body which, though widely separated as to its units, was closely united by common sentiment and interests, and so supplied elements which, in hands sufficiently daring and skilful, might be fused into the nucleus of a dangerous conspiracy against the established order of things. Thanks to their jealously preserved family traditions, the memory of what they looked upon as the wrongs that their ancestors had suffered at the hands of the Terrorists, and of the incalculable losses in wealth and power and dignity which those wrongs had entailed upon them, had been kept green among them.

They were descended from those who in their day had belonged to a different order of beings from the multitude of mankind, who had been lords and rulers among men by right of birth or individual force, while their children had been reborn of their birthrights, and reduced to the level of the common herd of men whom they had been accustomed to look upon as their servants, and left to fight their way in the battle of life when, as they believed, they ought to have passed their lives in luxurious leisure.

The second section of the will was of a purely scientific and technical character. It was a theoretical arsenal of weapons for the arming of those who, if they were to succeed at all, could only do so by bringing back that which it had cost such an awful expenditure of blood and suffering to banish from the earth in the days of the Terror. The designs of Paul Romanoff and the vast aspirations of those to whom he had bequeathed the crown of the great Catherine could have but one result if they ever passed from the realm of fancy to that of deeds.

What had been taken away by force could only be regained by force. To attempt to do so by peaceful means would be merely to raise a storm of ridicule and popular anger by pretensions which the mass of mankind would now look upon as almost too absurd to be taken seriously. Universal freedom and prosperity had made peaceful retrogression to the evil times of the nineteenth century impossible.

If the clock was to be put back only the armed hand could do it, and that hand must be so armed that it could strike at first secretly and yet with paralyzing effect. The few would have to array themselves against the many, and if they triumphed it would have to be by the possession of some such means of terrorism and irresistible destruction as those who had accomplished the revolution of 1904 had wielded in their aerial fleet.

Everything that could be learnt about the weapons in use before the peace was reproduced, and illustrated with accurate drawings, supplemented by suggestions for their improvement made in the light of more perfect scientific knowledge. No weapons actually remained in existence save a few collections in museums, and these were of course totally useless by reason of their age, and were merely preserved as relics of a bygone barbarism.

By far the most important part of this section of the will consisted of plans and diagrams of various descriptions of air-ships and submarine vessels, accompanied by minute directions for building and working them. Most of these were from the hand of Vladimir Romanoff, Olga's father, but of infinitely more importance even than all these was a detailed description, on the last page of the section, of the solution of a problem which had been attempted in the last decade of the nineteenth century, but which was still unsolved so far as the world at large was concerned.

This was the direct transformation of the solar energy locked up in coal into electrical energy without loss either

by waste or transference. How vast and yet easily controlled a power this would be in the hands of those who were able to wield it, may be guessed from the fact that in the present day less than ten per cent. of the latent energy of coal is developed as electrical power even in the most perfect systems of conversion.

All the rest is wasted between the furnace of the steam-engine and the dynamo. It was to electrical power obtained direct from coal and petroleum, that Vladimir Romanoff trusted for the motive force of his air-ships and submarine vessels, and which he had already employed with experimental success as regards the former, when his career was cut short by the swift and pitiless execution of the sentence of the Supreme Council.

Whether this great secret had been solved by the Aerians or not no one knew, for the isolated, and, save through the air, inaccessible valley in the centre of Africa, had been a terra incognita to the outside world for more than a century. It was supposed, from the marvellous beauty and incredible speed of their air-ships, that the descendants of the Terrorists were far in advance of the rest of the world both in art and science, but there was no definite knowledge on the subject because none was possible.

In all their dealings with the peoples of other countries, the Aerians exhibited the kindest demeanour and observed the most scrupulous courtesy, but where their own affairs were concerned, they invariably hedged themselves round with a dignified reserve which formed a barrier as impassable as the mighty rock-walls and untrodden swamps and jungles which fenced in their own enchanted realm and kept it inviolate against all intruders until the day, if ever it should come, when, in spite of all that had been done to prevent it, some other daring genius should conquer the empire of the air as Richard Arnold had done on the eve of the world-war of 1904.

The remainder of this section was occupied by a list of chemical formulae for the most powerful explosives then known to science and minute instructions for their preparation. At the bottom of the page which contained them there was a little strip of parchment fastened by one end to the binding of the other sheets and covered with very small writing.

Olga's eyes, wandering down over the maze of figures which crowded the page, reached it before Serge's did. One quick glance told her that it was something very different to the rest. She laid one hand carelessly over it, and with the other softly caressed Serge's crisp, golden curls. As he looked round in response to the caress their eyes met and she said, in her sweet, low, witching voice:

"Dearest, I have a favour to ask of you."

"Not a favour to ask, but a command to give, you mean. Speak and you are obeyed. Have I not sworn obedience?" he replied, laying his hand upon her shoulder and drawing her lovely face closer to his as he spoke.

"No, it is only a favour," she said with such a smile as Antony might have seen on the lips of Cleopatra. "I want you to leave me alone for a little time—for half an hour—and then come back and finish reading this with me. You know my brain is not as strong as yours, and I feel a little bewildered with all the wonderful things that there are in this legacy of my father's father."

"Before we go any further I should like to read it all through again by myself, so as to understand it thoroughly. So suppose you go to your smoking-room for a little, and leave me to do so. I shall not take very long, and then we will go over the rest together."

"But we have only a couple more pages to read, sweet, and then I will go over it all again with you, and explain anything that you have not understood."

As he spoke Serge's eyes never wavered for a moment from hers. Could he but have broken their spell he might have seen that she was hiding something from him under her little white hand and shapely, rounded arm. She brought her red smiling lips still nearer to his as she almost whispered in reply:

"Well, it is only a girl's whim, after all, but still I am a girl. Come, now, I will give you a kiss for twenty minutes' solitude, and when you come back and we have finished our task, you shall have as many more as you like."

The sweet, tempting lips came closer still to his, and the spell of her great dusky eyes grew stronger as she spoke. How was he to know what was hanging in the balance in that fateful moment? He was but a hot-blooded youth of twenty, and he worshipped this lovely girlish temptress who had not yet seen seventeen summers with an adoration that blinded him to all else but her and her intoxicating beauty.

He drew her yielding form to him until he could feel her heart beating against his, and as their lips met the promised kiss came from hers to his. He returned it threefold, and then his arm slipped from her shoulder to her waist, and he lifted her like a child from her chair, and carried her, half laughing and half protesting, to the door, claimed and took another kiss before he released her, and then put her down and left her alone without another word.

"Alas, poor Serge!" she said, as the door closed behind him; "you are not the first man who has lost the empire of the world for a woman's kiss. Before I saw that you were my equal and helpmate, now you and all other men—yes, not even excepting he who seems so far above me now, shall be my slaves and do my bidding so blindly that they shall not even know they are doing it."

"Yes, the weapons of war are worth much, but what are they in comparison with the souls of the men who will have to use them?"

In half an hour Serge came back to finish the reading of the will with her. The little slip of paper had been removed so skilfully that it would have been impossible for him to have even guessed that it had ever been attached to the parchment, or that it was now lying hidden in the bosom of the girl who would have killed him without the slightest scruple to gain the unsuspected possession of it.

(To be continued. Commenced last week.)

FICTION.

THE JENKS MOTOR.—A man named Jenks came to our place some days ago with a machine which he called "The Jenks Motor." Jenks said that it was the most wonderful discovery of the age. He said that the motive power was nothing but water.

All you had to do was to pour a bucketful of water into the "receiver," and it was instantly decomposed into gases; and then the gases started the machine, which Jenks said would run from here to China with half a pint of water. And Jenks said his little idea in coming to New Compton was to give the people a chance to subscribe to some of the stock of the Motor Company.

Jenks said he knew he was throwing away his own chances by selling the stock; but he was a philanthropist, and he wanted to give his fellow-men an opportunity to go into a big thing. So he set the machine up in a building, so that there would be no chance for fraud, and we all went round to see it work.

First he poured some water into the receiver, then he churned it up with a kind of a revolving paddle, then he opened valves and stamped on the floor, and the crank began to revolve with great rapidity.

We all thought it was wonderful, and Jenks said that words did not express the idea in full. We examined the machine, and saw that there were neither fire nor chemicals about it, nor any smell of gas; and Jenks said that we must now confess that it was just about the grandest achievement of the human intellect. Dr. Potts was about to admit the fact when the crank slowed up and we heard a vehement:

"At-schew!"

Apparently the sound came from beneath the floor. It sounded like a man sneezing, but Jenks said it was merely a violent expulsion of gas from the cylinder, and as the crank went ahead again rapidly we all thought he must be right. A minute later we heard another:

"Ah-ah-ah-tschew-w-w!"

And the machine stopped until it was over. Dr. Potts began to look cross-eyed at Jenks, as if he suspected something; but Jenks said it was one of the peculiar properties of these decomposed gases to push out of the cylinder with a violent hissing sound, and, although he had tried to prevent it, he found it to be impossible.

Then the machine went on again swiftly, and Jenks was just directing our attention to the pressure gauge, which stood at six hundred pounds to the square inch, when the machine came to a dead stop, and we heard, evidently in the cellar:

"Ah-ah-ah-tschew-w-w. Begorra, but I'll-sneeze the head off of me, ef I keep on."

Then the crank began to revolve again, and Jenks, getting very red in the face, said indignantly:

"Which of you gentlemen has been playing a trick on me by practising ventriloquism? It isn't fair."

Before anybody could answer we heard another terrific sneeze in the cellar, accompanied with an exclamation:

"Mother of Moses, but it bates anything down yer for ketching cowl!"

The machine came to a dead halt, and presently a square yard of the floor began to bulge up. Directly a human head appeared through the opening, and an Irishman crawled out into the room. Jenks looked ready to faint, and the man, getting up and brushing the cobwebs off his hat, said:

"Mr. Jenks! it's meself that's just tired of turding that crank down there in that dark hole. The rats is nibblin' me legs, and it's so damp that I'm ketchin' me death o' cowl. I'm goin' to give up the job."

While he was speaking, Dr. Potts discovered a fine wire running from the crank to the cellar, and hidden by the machinery. Jenks turned white, and stammered out:

"This is painful, gentlemen—very painful. But the fact is I-I-I hadn't quite got my receiver into working order, and I wanted—I thought—that is I—oh, hang it!"

And Jenks darted through the door and left the town. He didn't sell any stock in New Compton.

IF.—The other day I went to breakfast with B. He is the husband of Mrs. B., you know. I had been talking about the Queen. I flatter myself that if anyone knows anything of high life I'm that person. I take in the COURT CIRCULAR every week. B. seemed very much amused. He said:

"Now if I were King of England—"

"Which you are not—fortunately for us," cut in Mrs. B., with her usual good humour.

"Of course not, my dear," said B., in a tone of mild astonishment, "of course not. But if I was—"

"And never likely to be," interrupted his mother-in-law, who had only just caught on to what B. was saying.

"Perhaps not," said B., a little ruffled at her tone; "very likely not, but if I was—"

"Wouldn't it be splendid, pa," cried Miss Emily, aged sixteen, spilling her coffee in the excitement of the moment over my lap. "Just think how those Butterby girls would change their tone when they met me. And I'd have a new dress every day, and send my things to the wash just when I wanted to, an'—"

"Yes and wouldn't I give it to young Thrasham just," chirped in Master Tommy, a fierce light springing into his eyes. "I'd go up to him and hit him on the nose

with a brick. And if he hit me back it'd be treason, and I'd hang him and use his skull as a coal-scuttle. And I'd slide on the pavements, and snowball the bobbies, and keep a pastry cook's shop. And I'd have tarts for breakfast, and tarts for dinner, and tarts for supper; and I'd never go to bed."

"Yes," chimed in Mrs. B., catching the infection. "Yes, and I'd be the first lady in the land. I'd have balls twice a week, and banquets, and keep a carriage and pair."

"And I'd have the management of the Palace," piped the mother-in-law, waving her hand in the air. "I'd look after things, you see if I wouldn't. I'd—"

"Not much you wouldn't," shouted Emily. "You, indeed! I'd like to see you. Not if I had anything to say on the subject. I'd be the King's daughter, and if anyone interfered, I'd know the reason why. Not if I kept my health, and know myself you wouldn't, so you'd better make up your mind to that."

"Bah!" booted Tommy, dropping his bread-and-butter soft side downwards on the carpet. "I fancy the Prince of Wales would be the biggest plum in that cake. Who said I wouldn't be Prince of Wales? Say that again, will you? I'd like to hear it again. What 'd you know 'bout—"

"Hold your tongues, hold your tongues, all of you," yelled Mrs. B., bringing her hand down on the table with a crash which set all the glass and china giggling. "Wouldn't the Queen be the biggest authority in the land? Don't you contradict your mother, Thomas, or you'll go off to bed. Now, then, out you go. Not another word. And don't come down again till I send for you. I can tell you there would be a dusty time if anyone questioned my authority. What did you say, Emily?"

Very well, you go up after Thomas. Impertinent hussy! I'd like to see the person. By the way, Mr. B., what was it you were going to do if you were King?"

"Resign just as soon as I could," said my friend B. calmly, but with great determination.

And then a meditative silence fell upon the family. At least those members of it who remained. I didn't go to breakfast any more with B. It doesn't do to discuss politics at table when a woman's in the chair.

SHE: "This fur rug is very beautiful; to what beast does it belong?"

HE (candidly): "To me."

KATE: "No; Hettie does not attend any church; she says she is her own religion."

Harry: "That is a religion I should like to embrace."

"Why did Barlow and his wife go abroad on different steamers? Quarrel?"

"No. Mrs. Barlow thought it would be pleasanter for the children. Two steamers were not likely to be lost, and if one of them had gone down the children would have had one parent left."

A SCOTCH family removed to a house with a close range, after having been used to a common grate. One day the little boy was sitting on the fender, looking very sad.

"What's the matter with you, David?" asked the mother.

"Santa Claus winna get doon that lum," said the little fellow.

THERE is a story of a celebrated Indian potentate who took an English peer, who was staying with him, out shooting. The peer shot very badly, and the Eastern prince was sorely puzzled to combine Oriental compliment with empty game bags. At last, with a low bow, he said:

"Your Excellency shot splendidly, but Providence was very merciful to the little birds!"

RESULT OF ANAGRAM COMPETITION.

A NUMBER of good anagrams came to hand in this competition. One of the best, in reference to the Ardnamont Mystery, is, "The man Scott flies hemp noose."

A miniature dictionary has been forwarded to the following persons:

M. F. Warner, Rose Cottage, Winchmore Hill, N.; James Wilson, 37, Penrose Street, Plymouth; A. Mathieson, 30, Arthur Street, Greenock; H. J. Goodrich, 51, Wellington Street, Bedford; E. Harley, 7, Chrysall Road, Northampton; Mrs. Taylor, 7, Albion Grove, Stoke Newington; J. Tyson, 35, Convent Street, Liverpool; Staff Sergeant G. Buchanan, Headquarters, Eastern District, Colchester; W. G. Wipperfurth, 10, Moreland Street, Glasgow; E. C. A. Fildes, 10, Saint Nod's, Hunts; A. McHugh, Ballymalone Street, Longford, Ireland; Mrs. Blackburn, Devonshire Lodge, Hoston Moor, Stockport; G. Simba, 20, Park Street, Macclesfield; W. C. Pratt, 75, Church Street, Landport, Portsmouth; C. Fletcher, 101, Broad Street, Birmingham; J. Scott, Albert Road, Levenshulme, Manchester; Miss A. Fox, 15, Fosse Street, Sunderland; Lower Broughton, Salford; C. Daniels, 2, Bay View Villas, Ferry-side, Carmarthenshire; J. Gallacher, 25, Hillside Villas, Bradford; H. Beck, 4, Strawberry Dale Square, Harrogate; H. Groves, Clarkson Street, Mansfield; W. B. G. Goodenough Street, Tunstall, Staffs; Alex. McGregor, 6, Hoddles Buildings, Perth; H. Jackson, Waterloo House, Northampton; J. Morris, 1, Barnsbury Grove, Barnsbury; C. Woodall, 9, Park Terrace, Sunderland; H. Chapman, 125, Warwick Road, Kennington, S.W.; Miss E. M. Davis, 70, Renfrew Street, Glasgow; G. Wilson, 12, Sunderland Street, Houghton-le-Spring, Durham; E. Hornby, 30, Etruria Street, Stockport Road, Manchester; C. Baskie, 70, Renfrew Street, Glasgow; C. Clarke, 5, Berry Street, Burnley; Alex. Hedges, 4, Balfour Street, Donip; E. E. Moore, 2, Barton Street, Loughborough; W. Lewis, 10, Brunton, 25, Cambridge Street, Sheffield; Rev. A. Bell, Fern Lodge, Grove Grange, 78, Greenway Lane, Sheffield; Rev. A. Bell, Fern Lodge, Grove Road, Burnley; J. Norton, 17, Albion Street, London; Fred Sells, 157, Wightman Road, Hornsey; H. Askew, Albion, Rothley; E. Eton, 22, The Green, Crediton, Devon; J. Liddin, 21, Hill Street, Springfield, Glasgow; J. S. Brown, 100, Cape Lane, Plumstead; J. P. Steel, 22, Holloway Road, N.; E. Townsend, 20, St. Catherine's Place, Edinburgh; M. Vidal, 1, Park Road, Sunderland; David Gillespie, 5, Waterloo Place, Dumfries, N.B.; Mrs. E. Neillinger, 1, Queen Street, Gloucester.

FACTS.

THIRTY-FIVE countries have been invaded by the Salvation Army.

THE costliest mile of railway is a mile measured on the steel portion of the Forth Bridge.

THE Dorking fowl is the only living bird which in the adult condition possesses a five-toed foot.

A SINGLE sponge has been found on the coast of Florida with a circumference of five feet six inches.

STEEL coffins for the bodies of those who die suddenly on shipboard are being carried in some of the Transatlantic liners.

ACCORDING to the latest British census there are more actresses than actors in England, the former numbering 3,696, and the latter 3,625.

ABOUT 20 per cent. of the quantity of coal now produced in Great Britain is consumed in the working of ironstone and in the manufacture of iron and steel.

THE Australian mail steamers pay £100 a day fine for every day beyond the contract limit. The Indian and Chinese mails are fined £100 for every twelve hours' delay.

THEY encourage matrimony in Albania. When a girl wants to get married, she collects all her money and mounts the coins on her cap. You can then see what she is worth.

M. JANET cites various authorities to show that the wealth of the United Kingdom exceeds £10,000,000,000; that of France, £9,000,000,000; that of all Europe, £40,000,000,000; and that of the United States, £14,000,000,000.

It has been calculated that the annual expenditure in the salaries of football players, together with their training expenses, in the United Kingdom amounts to an aggregate of £1,078,000 sterling, or nearly twice as much as the annuities of the entire Royal family.

TEMPERANCE women of Norway asked the public authorities a short time ago to make it unlawful for women or girls to serve in public-houses. The request has been granted, and at present an alehouse-keeper cannot employ any other woman than his own wife.

A CERTAIN clique of West-end girls in London have established a "Five Foot Nine Club." Every member must not be shorter than three inches under six feet, and several are well over the prescribed limit. They are all fair to look upon. All ride in the park, and the whole club is to meet once a fortnight at the different members' houses.

WHEN the Queen is in residence at Windsor Castle scraps and broken victuals from her table are distributed every morning to certain old women in the neighbourhood. The used tea-leaves the recipients dry in the sun or before the fire and use again. As the tea has originally been the best and not allowed to stand long, it is most likely not much the worse for the second brewing.

THE lobster is greatly in dread of thunder, and when the peals are very loud numbers of them drop their claws and swim away for deeper water. Any great fright may also induce them to drop their claws. But new claws begin at once to grow, and in a short time they are as large as the old ones, and covered with hard shells. The lobster often drops its shells; it then hides until the new shell is hard enough to protect it.

SCOTSMEN are generally thought to be taller than the other inhabitants of the British Isles. Apparently this is not so, according to the statistics of a learned professor who made it his business to measure representatives of different races. His table places the Irishman first, the Scotsman second, the Englishman next. The same savant states that Irishmen weigh more than either Englishmen or Scotsmen, and have greater physical power.

I hereby certify that the premium in respect of PEARSON'S WEEKLY £1,000 RAILWAY INSURANCE, and also of the GENERAL ACCIDENT INSURANCE has been paid up to Jan. 25th, 1894, and that therefore every purchaser of PEARSON'S WEEKLY is insured with this Company against Fatal Railway Accident to the extent of ONE THOUSAND POUNDS under the conditions named in the coupon on page 391, and against all General Accidents, to the extent and under the conditions named in the coupon on page 392.

Richard T. Paul
Secretary of the
Ocean Accident & Guarantee
Company, Limited

"What have we here? The humours of a lifetime compressed within the limits of a scroll." Ha! Ha! These words seem to apply right well to P. W.

RAILWAY RIGHTS AND WRONGS.

V.—SOME SELECTED GRIEVANCES.

THE N.W. 10.30 from Shrewsbury arrives at Stafford at 11.10, while the North Stafford train leaves for Stoke at 11.5, and so determined is the company to spite the public in this case that its servants have got into trouble for telegraphing on to say that passengers for Stoke want to make the connection. For a really great company like the North-Western this is almost inconceivably mean. The North-Western Central Wales train is timed to reach Bullth Road at 4.15, while the Cambrian train—which only runs on Monday, and goes no farther than Bullth Wells, the next station—is carefully timed to leave Bullth Road at 4.15.

G. L. points out a piece of similar malice and selfishness on the part of the South-Western, the directors of which time their trains on the Staines branch so that they shall leave Richmond just before the arrival of the North London train. This frequently means that the North London passenger has to wait an hour, and on Sundays often three, to make a connection which has been missed by a minute or two. The object is, of course, to try and coerce passengers to travel solely by the South-Western. This is a fairly enlightened company, but in this case it seems to be about as mean as the rest.

J. M. sends some parallel absurdities in fares to that quoted in the first article of this series. Glasgow to Newcastle by North British Railway, 24s. 6d. return, available for a month; Glasgow to Tynemouth, via Newcastle (tourist ticket), 22s. 6d., available till December 31st, and giving the holder privileges as to breaking journey which are not allowed to the ordinary traveller, who pays two shillings more. Caledonian Railway, Glasgow to Aberdeen, single fare, 12s. 8d.; return, 15s. 10d. The outward journey must be made on the day the ticket is issued, but the return half is available for six months. On the same line, Stirling to Aberdeen, single, is 10s. 2d.; return, 17s. 8d., Stirling being one of the principal stations on the direct line, and twenty-nine miles nearer Aberdeen than Glasgow is.

"DISGUSTED" and "FIRST SEASON" send two complaints about one of the two worst railways in this country, the London, Chatham, and Dover, which, coming as they do from different points of view, will be heartily endorsed by hundreds of fellow-sufferers.

"DISGUSTED" after repeating the familiar true charges as to the filth, discomfort, and generally miserable character of the rolling stock and stations, tells me that not only is it the usual thing for eighteen and nineteen people to be crammed into the third-class carriages in the early trains, but that the guard's van is sometimes filled up too, in which case it is usual to pass the hat round for a gratuity to the accommodating guard, who thus gets free because his company so miserably fails to cope with the traffic. Of course this practice seriously interferes with the efficiency of the guard, and therefore with the safety of the train.

"FIRST SEASON" sends a justifiably bitter cry as to the filth and overcrowding of the first-class carriages on the Victoria and City line. Every morning he says they are overcrowded with third-class passengers, who trample on the toes and dig their elbows into the faces of those who have paid first-class fares in consideration of the extra room and comfort that the company does not give them. No ticket-inspector ever shows his face, and the injustice and annoyance go on unchecked.

To these two correspondents I can give a little legal advice. "DISGUSTED" may be interested to learn that while the conductor of an omnibus or tramcar can be summoned for carrying more passengers than his vehicle is constructed to hold, on the railway it is the other way about. A passenger getting into a carriage already full is liable to a penalty of forty shillings and costs, but the company's officials can fill the carriages to the roof without any risk to themselves or their employers. This is a gross injustice which Parliament ought to remedy at once.

"FIRST SEASON" will be equally interested to learn that when a first-class carriage is overcrowded with third-class passengers, those who have paid first-class fares can recover the difference between first and third-class fares, for the Courts have held that excess of valuable traffic does not absolve the company from giving the accommodation promised to the person who has paid for it. I should always advise everyone who has a second or third-class ticket to go straight for the first-class as soon as they see that their own class is properly full. Always go in a first-class rather than stand in a second or third.

F. T. some months ago sent a truck of goods per G. E. R. to Erith, in Kent. A week later he was informed that demurrage of £1 11s., in addition to carriage, £2 3s. 2d., had to be paid before the goods left the yard, and that he must find a cart to take the goods away. This cost him 8s. more. He paid under protest, learnt from the G. E. R. that the S. E. R. were wrong in saying they had charged demurrage, as they had only charged the carriage.

In another case a truck of goods from Birmingham went wrong on the S. E. R. They were transferred from the G. W. R. to the S. W. R. at Reading, directed to

Erith, got to Gravesend, went back to Dartford, and were finally found at the Bricklayers' Arms Station in London. He lost the sale of the goods, and had to order over again; put in a claim for £5 6s. 9d. loss incurred, and £1 11s. for demurrage wrongly charged; and now, after long correspondence, the S. E. R. offer him 13s. 6d., and 16s. on account of the demurrage. Before accepting this F. T. had better apply to the Secretary, Railway Passengers' Association, an interview with whom was published recently.

J. G. wishes to know whether this sort of thing still obtains on the Sheerness branch of the L. C. D. R. At 6.30 P.M. on Christmas Eve, 1891, he and his wife left Gravesend by S. E. R. for Rochester Bridge. There they waited an hour for the L. C. D. R. train for Sittingbourne. At Sittingbourne the local train waited for three hours and two up main-line trains, or for four and a half hours, until it got what the management considered a sufficient number of passengers to pay them to start the local train, which ultimately got to Sheerness at 1 A.M. on Christmas morning. J. G. and his wife were seriously ill from the exposure, and one young lady died from it three weeks after. . . . Will possible sufferers in the same district kindly communicate?

TYNESIDER says that on the Tynemouth branch of the N. E. R. tickets taken on Saturday are available till Monday, but if taken any other day it costs fourpence extra to return the next day. This branch line is circular, running from Newcastle Central, via Tynemouth, to Newcastle New Bridge. Ordinary tickets may be used either way, but contract ticket holders are charged £1 a year extra for the privilege of doing what the ordinary ticket holder can do any day without cost.

[Correspondence invited. Mark envelopes "RAILWAY."]

A STRANGE CURE.

ONE of the most estimable women in a London suburb is subject to sudden fainting fits, and confidently expects some day to die during one of these. Several days ago, while sitting at her front window engaged in some light needlework, conversing with a neighbour, she felt one of the spells coming over her. She called to her friend to summon Dr. —, and then fainted. The friend went for the family doctor, and in no time he was in the house. Meanwhile the sufferer was sure she was dying.

"Oh, Mrs. —," she sobbed hysterically, "I know I am going this time! I'm dying now! I'm dying! Good-bye!"

The doctor began the application of the usual restoratives, but they seemed of no avail. The sufferer appeared to be gradually losing her breath, and the doctor believed that she was expiring. He tore away the clothing about her neck, and called to her friend:

"Mrs. —, take off her shoes, please. We must enliven her circulation somehow."

The doctor got her neck free enough, but when the friend lifted one foot to remove the shoe the sufferer kicked her friend's hands with the other foot. The doctor did not notice this, but, thinking the friend could not perhaps undo the buttons, he reached down and picked up one of the patient's feet. The sufferer, evidently at her last gasp, kicked him also, but the doctor was determined.

"Mrs. —," he said, "your shoes are too tight. They must come off."

"Don't, doctor," gurgled the patient; "don't, doctor, I'm dying."

"I know it, Mrs. —," he said, "but those shoes must come off."

"Oh, no, doctor," was the feeble pleading.

"But I say yes," answered the now frightened doctor.

"And I'll take them off, too."

"Oh, doctor, please don't, please don't."

"I'm sorry, Mrs. —, but —"

Raising herself with a powerful effort, the patient, pale as death itself, gasped:

"Please don't take off my shoes, doctor—my stockings are full of holes."

The effort seemed to bring back the life to the sufferer, and in half an hour she was as well as ever, with a new pair of stockings on, fully ready for the next "faint."

JONES (to Brown): "Where can you be running to at that express pace?"

Brown: "Why, this is a present for my wife—a bonnet, and I am trying to arrive at home before the fashion changes."

HE waxed eloquent over his fiancée's beauty. Her eyes were lustrous, her nose fine, her lips a theme for the poet.

"And her teeth?" interrupted his friend.

"Teeth," he murmured, rapturously, "like those of a newly-born babe!"

AN APPARENT INJUSTICE.—Mollie had been to church for the first time, and on her return home her grandmother asked her what she thought of it.

"I like it very much," she replied; "but there was one thing I didn't think was fair."

"What was that, dear?"

"Why, one man did all the work and then another man came round and got all the money."

THE LAST DAYS OF MR. CLERK.

IT really seems as if the days of the man clerk were numbered. During the last few years the commercial world has been invaded by an army of females, an independent and altogether superior people. For a time they gathered at the office doors unheeded, and the public, looking at the matter in the light of a joke, gave them good-natured encouragement, shoving, for the fun of the thing, from behind.

It never entered their heads for a moment that a serious breach might be made in the city walls. But simultaneously with the introduction of the typewriter came the date of the girls' first success. Their skilful manipulation of this weapon quickly opened a way for them, and since then they have been steadily, persistently advancing.

Already a writer in a Canadian magazine has declared the man clerk doomed to absolute and ignominious extinction. He announces, with tears in his eyes, that if the women continue to hurl themselves into the cities during the next twenty years as they have since 1880, half the business of Canada and the United States will be in their hands. And the men, one may presume, will be found making the beds, washing up plates, nursing the children, darning the family stockings, and on their knees scrubbing the floors.

A similar cloud darkens the horizon at home. There was a time, and not very long ago either, when men would turn round to see a woman in Mincing Lane, and the rustle of a skirt in Throgmorton Street would cause quite a flutter in the market. But now, not content with thronging the streets, they actually challenge the right of the man clerk to work in an office at all, and then end by quietly ousting him.

Certainly there is much to recommend the girl clerk to the employer. First of all she is cheap, her fingers are skilful, her manners all that can be wished, and on wages which would mean starvation to a man she can afford to dress tidily if nothing else. This is a very important consideration in many offices where appearances count for a good deal, and an air of prosperity about the place brings business. It cannot be denied that, taking them altogether, girl clerks are neater, more obliging, and more painstaking than the men. And experience has shown that physically they are quite able to do all that is expected of them.

From a commercial point of view, then, this new and to-day-turvy order of things is highly satisfactory.

But looking at it in any other light we can only deplore the sight of self-emancipated woman sitting on a high stool and triumphantly turning her brothers out into the street to starve.

From carefully compiled statistics one learns that no fewer than 50 per cent. of the girls toiling in the City might quite comfortably live at home if only they were content with the spheres of life to which they had been called. But the fashion of to-day is discontent. It is not necessity but ambition which drives girls from their homes, where their duty lies, to the office, where they are morally trespassing on other people's ground.

If the sisters could work side by side with their brothers, Britain might well be proud of her industrious children. But there is not room for both. The girls can do other work, and still retain their sex; the men cannot. Who, then, ought to give way?

At the present time the man at the office can earn enough to keep a wife and family and maintain a home, but the girl who is supplanting him cannot afford to propose to a man and set up a house for him to look after while she is working.

If she ever does become established to the exclusion of mankind, she will be able to demand higher wages, and then the position of the sexes, being entirely reversed, things will go along very much as they did before. Only the women will do the work and the men stay at home and do the housekeeping, probably quite content.

But this unnatural state of affairs ought not to be allowed. Cannot something be done to stay the hand of evolution? the domesticated man and the business woman we would rather be without. There is only one remedy—the girl clerk must resign.

LADY OF THE HOUSE (to new girl): "I cannot allow you to keep a follower of your own. There is a corporal, who comes to our house every Sunday; he is accustomed to our ways, and all my former servants have had him for a sweetheart; you can have him, too."

"WHAT are you about, you rascal? Twice have you roused me from my sleep to tell me that breakfast is ready, and now you've woken me by attempting to pull off the bedclothes. What do you mean?"

"Why, sir, if you aren't going to get up, I must have the sheet, anyhow, because they're waiting for the table-cloth."

"WHATEVER is worth doing," observed Tommy Tarbox, smearing another daub of green paint on the family cat, "is worth doing well."

"It is, my son; it is," cordially assented Mr. Tarbox, unexpectedly emerging from the kitchen door with a strap in his hand, and leading Tommy rapidly towards the bedroom.

IN THE WAY.

A LADY, residing in a quiet village in Suffolk, used to take an interest in a very aged couple who were spinning out the last thread of life in "Darby and Joan" fashion, seated on either side of their fireplace. She often paid them a visit to cheer them up. The old man had been ailing, and at last a day came when the visitor found only one chair occupied. Darby was not in his usual place.

"Where is your husband?"
"Well, mum! he be gone at last."
"Oh! I'm very sorry; that is very sad for you," said the lady, seeking to find some words of consolation.
"Yes, mum, it be sad," replied the old woman; "but then, you see, he were fearfully in the way of the oven."

WHERE SCHOOLBOYS ARE DRUDGES.

THE German schoolboy is about the most miserable boy on earth. In this country every schoolboy is accustomed to at least two or three hours of active play every day, but in Germany the schoolboy has absolutely no recreation at all. Most of the scholastic establishments being for day-boys only, there are no such things as playgrounds, and the consequence is such games as football, cricket, rowing, or paper-chases are almost unknown.

School work begins at 8 A.M., and lasts, with a short interval for meals, until about six o'clock in the evening. But this is not all. The scholar takes home with him another two or three hours' work, which he has to have ready for the master's inspection the following morning.

Even in his holidays the German schoolboy has to work, and work pretty stiffly too, if he does not wish for heavy punishment when he returns to school.

The result of this unhealthy custom is, as a rule, that the German schoolboy is a being absolutely devoid of energy and cheerfulness.

QUEER NOTIONS ABOUT WAVES.

It was formerly held among certain devout Catholics that the commotion of the sea was owing to the serpents which St. Patrick had imprisoned in a box when he cast them out of Ireland.

The Arab sailors believed that the high seas off the coast of Abyssinia were enchanted, and whenever they found themselves among them they recited verses which were supposed to subdue them.

An old traveller says that in a voyage from Messina to Malta he saw the captain, an experienced sailor, standing at the bow muttering and pointing with his finger.

On being asked what he was doing, his answer was that he was breaking the force of an apparently fatal wave by making the sign of the cross and saying prayers proper for such occasions.

The Persians believe that the waves of the Persian Gulf are caused by air entering caves which have subterranean outlets under the ocean.

But one of the most curious beliefs of all—one closely akin to a certain ancient Oriental school belief—is that of the South Sea Islanders. According to their notion, the rolling of the sea is caused by a "thunder god." In old times this "thunder god" killed the chief deity of the island and was confined under the ocean as a punishment. His rolling with rage causes the waves.

THE WRONG CARD.

DURING his visit to Paris a distinguished German professor presented himself at the house of a well-known lady, to whom he had sent letters of introduction for a dance.

When the servant opened the door and received his card, she conducted him to the boudoir and told him to be seated, saying:

"Madam will come immediately."

Presently the lady entered. She was in *dishabille*, and her feet were bare, covered only with loose slippers. She bowed to him carelessly, and said:

"Ah, good morning."

She threw herself on a chair, let fall a slipper, and extended her very pretty foot to the professor. He was naturally completely astounded, but he remembered that at his home in Germany it was the custom sometimes to kiss a lady's hand, and he supposed it was the Paris mode to kiss her foot. Therefore he did not hesitate to imprint a kiss upon the fascinating foot so near him.

The lady jumped up, highly indignant.

"Who are you, sir, and what do you mean?"

He gave his name.

"Then you are not a chiropodist?"

"I am charmed to say, madame, that I am not."

"But you sent me a chiropodist's card?"

It was true. The professor, in going out that morning, had picked up the card of a chiropodist from his bureau, and put it in his pocket. This, without glancing at it, he had given to the servant, who had taken it to her mistress. There was nothing to be done but laugh over the joke.

NICELY DONE.

DOCTOR GLYNN, a benevolent but eccentric physician of Cambridge, was once consulted by a poor woman about her only son, too ill to be brought to the doctor's office. The maternal anxiety so affected the doctor, that he went several times to see the boy, though the roads were almost impassable for a carriage, and supplied him with medicine and port wine at his own expense.

The boy recovered, and one morning the mother entered the doctor's room, bringing a large wicker basket.

"We can't get no rest, doctor," said she, "for thinking of the trouble you have had, and so my boy resolved this morning to send you his pet magpie."

The doctor looked at the bird, remarked that he was a fine fellow, and then continued:

"I am very thankful to your son, and very proud of his present; but I am a good deal from home, and my servant is a careless fellow, and I am afraid he might forget to feed him. I must therefore request you to keep him for me, and I will allow you a shilling a week for his board as long as he lives."

The old woman accepted the good man's thoughtful suggestion, and was paid the first month's board in advance.

BURMESE BOXERS.

CHAMPION loafer of the world as the average Burman certainly is, he evinces an intense appreciation of sport—that is, sport in which no killing of bird or animal is involved.

The boxing match is his favourite form of recreation, and he will travel miles to see a good one.

Directly the band begins a big fellow, with his lungi, or shirt, tucked up to protect his abdomen, jumps into the arena and capers about, smacking the biceps of his left arm, and offering to box any man who cares to tackle him. If no one comes along he gets madder, and stands on his head, makes grimaces, and behaves generally as if he were demented.

When at last someone joins him they get to work without delay. Boxing-gloves are either unknown or are beneath their contempt; open hands form the weapons. The feet, too, are greatly used to put in uncomfortably heavy hits, and when one fellow gets his opponent's head under his left arm he proceeds to ram his elbow smartly several times into the small of his victim's back.

Most of the fights continue till blood flows, and occasionally it's very laughable to see a poor fellow protesting that he is not bleeding while all the time a small cataract is gushing from his nostrils. It says a great deal for the good humour of the Burmese that none of them ever lose their tempers in such combats. If anything is calculated to enrage a boxer it is getting his head into chancery. It's bad enough and undignified enough in England, but in Burmah the victor doesn't simply punch the other man's head; he just lifts his knee sharply against his nose, and blood flows—as a rule.

AT A TWOPENNY THEATRE.

THE oldest playhouse in London, Sadler's Wells Theatre, the scene of some of Phelps' grandest impersonations, and now under the management of Mr. G. Belmont, is the cheapest entertainment established in the metropolis. For the sum of twopence you can sit here for two hours and watch a virtuous melodrama, not the least exciting item of which is the stuffing of a coiner's body down a chimney, following which a number of variety turns are presented.

If you can afford more than twopence, a stall costs threepence; a sixpenny piece will hire a leather arm-chair in the dress-circle; or a shilling will procure you a seat in the Royal Box; and, I doubt not, the reputation of an aristocrat. The price of a programme is a halfpenny.

Of all playgoers those at the twopenny theatre are quite the most enthusiastic. At Sadler's Wells two performances are given nightly, and not only do the same people often witness both shows, but many of them are present six nights a week. For one shilling each 'Arry and his Donah can get twelve hours of each others company enlivened by twelve hours' soul-stirring entertainment.

Contrary to general belief, the audience is exceedingly well-behaved; Mr. and Mrs. 'Awkins may bring the family brandy bottle, and decline to offer it to their next-door neighbour, but there is no horse play. While the curtain is up every eye is riveted on the stage, and if the villain—if there is no villain there is generally no audience—is unusually diabolical, one or two strictly moral members of the audience just go solemnly round to the stage door and wait for him. He often has great difficulty in getting away uninjured. It is awkward for the villain, but it pays, for the simple reason that many women professedly come to have a good cry. One good lady sitting next to me remarked that "Tears is such a stimulant."

There is little or no drinking. In the old days of Sadler's Wells sixpence would purchase a pint of port or punch, but the refreshment bars are of little importance now. The interest of the audience is well looked after, at least half of the programme being changed every week.

SOME SATISFACTION.

"WHAT are you doing?" said the manager of the hotel. "Do you want to asphyxiate yourself and die on our hands?"

"What's the matter with you?"

"You've gone and blown out the gas."

"Nuthin' of the kind. I'm entitled to the use of this gas, ain't I?"

"Yes."

"Well, I can't get any satisfaction by lighting it. The only way I can get my money's worth is to sit here and smell it."

A STAMP COLLECTOR'S PARADISE.

It may not be generally known that Paris is the great postage-stamp market of the world, and that there are more men there who gloat over a Black Bermuda, or go into ecstasies over a yellow something else, than in any other capital.

There is a regular Bourse held every Thursday and Sunday in a corner of the Champs Elysees, where hundreds of men, women, and boys, congregate with their postage-stamp albums and packages of stamps for sale and exchange.

There is almost as big a gabble of tongues going on there as on the regular Bourse, and so great has the throng become that the authorities contemplate roofing in that particular part. It is said that thousands of francs change hands there every market day.

ITALIAN INNS.

ITALIAN life is, even in small villages, all out-of-doors. The kitchen of an Italian inn, no matter of what degree, has always a warm hearth, and its larder is more plentifully stored than a public-house in England of the same description. The only faults—some one may think it is a long and a rather complete list—are noise, dirt, and universal disorder and confusion.

They never know what rooms they have; they bawl out to each other, the landlord to the landlady, and the latter to the waiter, "Try number fifty-seven or forty-six!" till they at last find you a bedchamber.

In the morning there is knocking at your next-door neighbour's, or by mistake at your own door, to ask whether it be not you who are to be off by the early train at six; or maybe it is the waiter, officiously waking you up to inform you that "it is only four, and you have still two hours for your slumber."

You always seem to catch them at the wrong moment, always find them unprepared, as if their's were anything but an open house, and a traveller the most unlooked for thing in the world. Their cordial greeting and friendly bustle help you to overlook the discomfort that every traveller is sure to experience, and the abundance of the table is on the plane with the innkeeper's appetite—he is ever ready "to eat and let eat."

GOOD JUDGMENT.

A WELL-KNOWN singer says that if he were ever tempted to consider himself famous, he should only need to recall an experience which he had in an American city one winter, and his self-esteem would instantly receive a check. He was announced to sing in an oratorio at this place, and his portrait was displayed in the windows of most of the shops, as well as on a great many posters in conspicuous spots, here and there.

While eating an orange one day he swallowed a pip, which lodged in his throat in such a way as to be both painful and dangerous. In great haste he went to the nearest physician, who, by the aid of an instrument, speedily removed the pip. After the operation the physician scanned his patient's throat with great interest for a few moments, and then said:

"What is your name, sir?"

On receiving the desired information, he said:

"Have you ever studied singing?"

"Why, yes, a little," replied the other, much amused.

"Lately?" persisted the physician.

"No, I haven't studied at all, lately," said the singer.

"Well," said the physician, who was a short, florid, pompous man, "I think, sir, you are making a mistake. I sing a great deal myself, and I've made a study of it. I don't want to encourage anyone unduly, but your throat, sir, is a good one for singing; and although it wouldn't probably pay you to give up your business to make music a profession, if you could get a chance to study under a good teacher, I believe, sir, that in time, and with proper cultivation, your voice would give great pleasure to your friends."

Pocketing his fee, in exchange for which he gave the inwardly convulsed singer a card bearing the address of a "first-class teacher" in that city, the musical doctor bowed his unknown patient out of the room. The sequel came two nights later, when the singer, who had consented to appear at a "Grand Concert," had the delight of seeing his quondam physician, with his eyes almost starting from his head, glaring at him from a front seat of the crowded hall.

"Forsooth, a marvellous invention—a very marvellous invention, that will prove an unfailing, everlasting stimulant of mirth and laughter. I like it well. Methinks that such as this may be a better tonic than a drug." It is remarks like these which prove the prophetic insight of the poets. There can be no doubt that the bard was thinking of P.W.

HOME NOTES.

A PAGE MORE PARTICULARLY FOR LADIES.

ISRAEL will be glad to answer, in this page, questions of general interest upon household matters, so far as space permits. Envelopes should be marked HOME NOTES.

MORE ABOUT OUR PAPER.

I FEEL sure that after reading the notice of our new paper *Home Notes*, which appeared in these columns last week, my readers will have many questions to ask on the subject. Masters have so far progressed that this week I can give an outline of the contents of what will, I believe, be the most valuable Home paper issued.

It is to be essentially a WOMANLY paper, so that all that pertains to the home, and the improvement thereof, will be found in it. Much practical advice on these subjects, will be given; advice which will help the housewife to economize, and to make home what it should be when modest means only are to hand.

Before looking inside this paper let us look at the cover, and though we are told not to judge by appearances, still I think in this case the appearance will prejudice us decidedly in its favour. The size is that of a magazine, and the cover paper is thick, stiff, and magazine-like. This size is most convenient for reading, and when bound will make a charming volume of reference and a useful addition to every domestic library. The cover is beautifully designed by a special artist, and is a speaking key-note to its contents.

In the first columns I shall, under the heading of "Fireside Talk" write on all current subjects of interest to women.

The next pages will be devoted to that all-important subject, "Health in the Home;" and, as no one is so great an authority on this subject as Mrs. Ada S. Bailin, I have arranged that she shall fill these columns week by week with valuable advice as always proceeds from her pen.

The next few pages will contain a profusely illustrated article on Fashions. For this we have secured *exclusively* the very best and newest designs from a Paris house, in order that weak by weak readers of *Home Notes* will be able to know just-hand what is being worn in that popular haunt of Fashion.

The different features in our new paper have all been suggested to me by my correspondence in connection with this magazine—therefore I feel this weekly magazine of Home life would be incomplete without a small amount of space being devoted to the "House Beautiful." Here all points of interest in the beautifying of our homes will be treated. This subject will, I know, interest many.

What sunshine children bring to a Home, and what willing slaves we all are to that arch-tyrant King Baby! If, though, his roguish naughty ways forsake him, and he is ill, what interest has anything else for us, until he is better! The experienced or inexperienced mother will find of special interest to her, a page headed "Mothers in Council," written by the Editor of "BABY," and dealing with the management, care, and bringing up of the little ones. Words from such an authority on children will be read, I am sure, with intense interest by all who have their welfare at heart.

We know the old saying that "all work and no play makes Jack a dull boy." I have borne this idea in mind in compiling our paper. So on pages 13-17 will be found either a complete short story or an instalment of a serial. I am securing really good work for this department, and so have every confidence in saying that in the fiction of *Home Notes* you will find recreation of the best kind.

I think the fiction in *Howe Notes* is rather like the jam in a sandwich, not that I would insinuate that the matter which encloses it on either side is to be dull, far from it, but it is certainly to be of a useful kind.

Under the heading "Over the Kitchen Fire" will be found the best recipes for all kinds of dishes suitable for our daily wants. In order to suit the requirements of all, I shall give one week a very simple menu, with recipes for it, and the next I shall give a higher class menu with accompanying recipes. In this way I hope to please my different readers.

Besides the menu, there will be various recipes for puddings, entrées, savouries, sweets, cakes, etc., and I shall always be glad to give some dishes for children, and invalid cookery.

"Home Dreamaking" is a subject which will come home to the hearts of many of my friends, especially to my younger ones, and yet not entirely to them, for I am sure the help given on the subject of Children's clothes will be eagerly read by Mothers. This combined with the article of Paris Fashions will be of great value. In this one department alone, the penny spent on our paper will be very well invested, for the advice will be so good that I am sure the penny will put the amateur dressmaker in the way of saving many a pound.

In the first number of *Home Notes*, a most interesting series of articles will be begun, called "Little known Wives of well-known Men." In reading sketches of eminent men I have so often thought I should like to know their wives. If I think thus no doubt there are many other women who do the same, and will find much of interest in this series.

So many requests have come to me to give more space in this page to Personal Health, that I have asked Mrs. Ballin to write each week on the subject, under the name of "Health and Beauty."

"Feminine Fancies" will contain many pretty directions on needle-work of all kinds, and in order that there may be no difficulty in deciphering the patterns, I shall give sketches of them wherever possible, and where the case seems to require it.

There is another branch of the household which does not come under any of the heads I have mentioned, but is one that cannot be left out. "Household Hints" will give all

kinds of information and recipes for the house otherwise than cooking. Various methods of cleaning different things, repairing, etc., etc.

The last page will be devoted to Prize Competitions, and we shall offer handsome prizes to be gained in various forms of competition. Many interesting articles on various subjects will be given each week, besides the regular features. By-the-by that word reminds me of a point which I had omitted to mention—namely, that beautifully illustrated "Feature Headings" have been designed for us by a special artist. These not only illustrate the name, but give as well a sketch appropriate to the subject. Altogether our paper will, I am sure, be acknowledged to be in every way just what every woman likes.

The paper itself will be very good, which is a great point, for women specially appreciate such details. *Home Notes* will be profusely and well illustrated. Articles, regular features, and stories alike will share this advantage, and that it is one you will not, I am sure, question. We shall, therefore, have a weekly magazine containing both useful knowledge and recreation in a stiff cover, so that it will stand the amount of wear which its value will ensure to it without getting shabby.

It is often a trouble to get new publications from news-agents, so we have arranged that everyone who, before January 15th, will send her name and address and a shilling shall have the first twelve numbers sent to her post free. I shall be glad to have the names sent in to me as early as possible, in order that they may be booked at once.

Sufferers from Rheumatism should eat freely of celery, both raw and cooked.

Tapestry Chairs may be cleaned by rubbing with warm bran and new flannel. (Reply to ANXIOUS ONE.)

A Paper Mousetrap. The sticky fly-paper which is commonly sold during the summer season is said to make an excellent mousetrap. A sheet of it laid in front of any hole from which mice emerge is sufficient to hold them fast until they are captured and destroyed. The same paper may be used over and over again.

How to Extinguish Fire in a Chimney.
Throw some powdered brimstone on the fire in the grate, or ignite some on the hob, and then place a board or something in front of the fireplace to prevent the fumes descending into the room. The vapour of the brimstone ascending the chimney will then effectually extinguish the soot on fire.

Punch. I have much pleasure in giving you an old recipe for Punch which has been in my family for years: Place in a Punch bowl half a pound of loaf sugar, the juice and thin rind of a lemon, and the juice of two sweet oranges. Pour over two pints of boiling water. Stir well, and then add half a pint of old rum and a quarter of a pint of brandy. (*Reply to* WOOD GREEN.)

Notel Newspaper-Holders. Get a nice, large fish-basket, scrub it well to remove all smell and hang it in the air to sweeten. Then paint it a bright colour or gild it all over. Decorate it with some wool balls, ribbons, or paint it, and arrange cords or ribbon to suspend it from the wall. This suggestion may be carried out in various ways, and pretty articles thus made for bazaars at a small cost.

Salad may be Preserved Crisp and fresh for several days if it is kept in a box prepared by the directions given below. Take a small empty wooden box and line the inside with several thicknesses of newspaper. Sprinkle this lining well with cold water, place the salad in the box, cover it with more damped paper, place in a cool place, and be sure to keep the top papers damp. The salad, even in your hot climate should be as nice when taken from the box as if fresh cut. (Reply to A.V.Z., Sydney.)

To Cure Hams. This should be done in the winter months only. It will generally be found safe to begin pickling at the end of October. Let the ham hang for three days after the pig is cut up. Prepare the pickle by pounding and sifting one pound of salt, two ounces of saltpetre, one drachm of cochineal, one pound of very coarse sugar, and a very few cloves of eachalot. Mix these ingredients well together, put them into a frying-pan over a clear fire, stirring the whole till it becomes a little warm, but not melted. Then rub the ham all over with it before a strong, clear fire until it becomes a fine red. Then let it stand two days in a ham-pan, when a quarter of a pint of cold spring water must be sprinkled over it. Let it remain two days more, after which bathe it frequently, and turn every day for a month, then drain it for twenty-four hours. Afterwards hang the ham in a chimney where wood is burnt till well dried. The ham when once dried should be wrapped in clean, strong paper, put into a bag, and hung up. During the summer weather always watch all dried meats, to see that they are not attacked by flies.

(Reply to N. W.)

To Clean Plaster of Paris Ornaments,
cover them with a thick layer of starch, and let it dry ;
remove with a stiff brush.

A Clear Fire for Grilling Purposes
can be quickly obtained by sprinkling over it a little powdered nitre. It is used by all first-class chefs and grill-cooks.

Clean Decanters with strips of brown paper and cold water, filling the decanter quite full with the strips. Tea leaves, potato parings, and shot are also used, but nothing gives the polish of the brown paper.

Teach Children thrifty and industrious habits while they are still quite young, and they will always retain the habits. I advocate first giving small children very light tasks, such as clearing up their toys, etc., before going to bed, and by degrees, as a child grows, try to discover what work it is naturally fond of. It is a mistake to make little ones work so long that they become tired and disgusted with all work; far better is it to encourage them to work long enough to accomplish some given object, and if possible make the child realise that it is helping to brighten the life of some other child.

To Utilise your Pickle Vinegar follow this recipe:
 Pound half an ounce of cayenne pepper, half an ounce of
 eschalot, one-eighth of an ounce of garlic in a marble
 mortar, adding gradually one quart of pickle or other
 vinegar, then press it through a hair sieve. Add a
 quarter of a pint of Indian soy, then bottle it and cork
 for use. If you find this method too tedious, after pound-
 ing the ingredients put them into a jar and pour the boil-
 ing vinegar on to them. Cover close, and let stand
 till the vinegar has well extracted the flavour of the
 ingredients, and before bottling add the soy. This sauce
 improves when kept. (Reply to EDITH P., St. Asaph's.)

Tartar Sauce for salmon and other fish is made thus: Beat to a cream half a cupful of butter. Place the raw yolks of two eggs into another bowl, with a generous teaspoonful of made mustard, a saltspoonful of salt, a teaspoonful of cayenne sugar, and a small pinch of cayenne pepper. Beat the eggs and seasoning rapidly for five minutes, then add the creamed butter gradually, beating well. Next add (a few drops at a time) three tablespoonfuls of vinegar and one of lemon juice, beating it thoroughly all the while. When the mixture is thick and smooth add a tablespoonful of oil of chopped capers and pickled cucumber. To warm the sauce stand the basin containing it in a saucepan of boiling water for five minutes. Stir the sauce meanwhile, and be careful that it does not boil. (Reply to READER of P.W.)

A Winter Dish of Salmon. The ingredients required are one tin of salmon, two eggs, a tablespoonful of melted butter, one cup of bread-crumbs, pepper, salt, a little cayenne and tarragon vinegar. Drain the liquor from the fish. Pick the fish to pieces, and add it to the bread-crumbs and melted butter. Add the seasoning, and lastly the two eggs well beaten. Butter a mould or basin well, and scatter browned crumbs on it, place the salmon, etc., in it, cover the mould with a buttered paper, and steam for one and a half hours. Stand the bowl for a moment in cold water, to loosen the contents and turn out on a hot dish. Make a little good melted butter, add the liquor from the fish to it, and, if liked, a beaten egg and some finely-chopped pickle. Boil the sauce till it leaves the sides of the pan, and serve round the mould.

Verdel

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"YOUR LIFE IS NOT WORTH A STRAW."

It is not worth a straw, eh? Then it was worth just nothing—nothing at all. Who has not used that comparison a thousand times to express absolute worthlessness? A straw? The wind blows it away, fire burns it up, cattle tread it in the mud, it rots by the roadside. What of it? Who cares for a straw?

Yet this is exactly what a doctor recently said to one of his patients, "Your life is not worth a straw." How much is a doctor worth who will speak so to one that trusts him, and has no hope in his skill? For my part, if he were up for sale at auction, I could bid one straw for him—no more. Even if what he said was true, he had no right to say it. Such a doctor is more likely to play with his tongue than to cure with his drugs.

A woman tells the story, and she tells it well. If it doesn't sound like the truth, then I don't know what ever does. The dates and facts are all there, plain and orderly.

"In the summer of 1878," she says, "I found myself feeling tired, languid, low-spirited, and weak. I felt as if some evil were about to happen. My appetite was poor, and after eating I had excruciating pain at my loins and sides. There was a horrible drawing pain at the pit of my stomach, and a rising in the throat as if I should choke. My head felt as though I had a ton weight on it. Gradually I got worse, and for months could take only liquid food. At night I lay awake for hours together.

"Later on I suffered greatly from nervous prostration. My legs trembled and shook so I feared to fall. If a knock came to the door I trembled from head to foot. I had frequent attacks which began with palpitation of the heart and sudden stoppage of the breath. At these times I was speechless and helpless. They told me I looked like a corpse, cold and bloodless, my finger-nails and hair were turning black. After a while this would pass off, leaving me weak and prostrate. I got so emaciated and thin that I was only a bag of bones, and so weak I had to take hold of the furniture to steady myself as I crossed the room. As time went on the nervousness and forebodings of evil so increased that I feared I should go out of my mind. The neighbours

said it would be a mercy if the Lord would release me from my sufferings.

"In this condition I continued for over four years, during which time I consulted five doctors, but nothing they gave me did any good. They all said my ailment was heart disease, and one said, 'Your life is not worth a straw.'

"In despair I gave up taking physic, as I felt that nothing would save me. In May, 1882, ten years ago, a lady (Mrs. Richardson) called at my house, told me of Mother Seigel's Curative Syrup, and strongly advised me to try it. I did so, and felt somewhat better after the first bottle; and by the time I had taken three bottles I was completely cured. From that to this I have had no return of the attacks, and am so strong I can do any kind of work. But for Seigel's Syrup I should have been in my grave long ago. I wish others to know this, and will answer any who call or write. (Signed) EMMA WICKENDEN (wife of William Wickenden, gardener), Pembroke Villas, 123, Moffat Road, Thornton Heath, March 17th, 1892."

So it turned out that her life was not only worth a straw, but worth a whole golden harvest of health and better days. Yet no thanks to the doctors. Her complicated symptoms puzzled and alarmed them, to be sure, but why? Is it not the doctors' duty to understand such things? Most assuredly. Just as a lawyer should know the law, or a pilot the rocks, tides, and lights of a coast. Had some of these medical men known that Mrs. Wickenden's malady was indigestion and dyspepsia, and not heart disease, they might possibly have relieved her. But, confused by the symptoms, they were blind to the cause. We may well wonder if there are many such doctors in England.

Cases like this show that the clear sight belonged to Mother Seigel; and to her remedy hosts of people in this country are indebted for physical salvation when, in very truth, their lives seemed as straws.

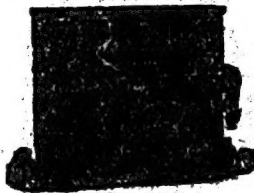
Remember this was ten years ago, and the malady has not returned, showing that the cure was a permanent one.

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OWING to the Christmas holidays we have to go to press early with this number, and I cannot therefore say anything about last week's notice regarding Dr. Tyson's cure for drunkenness. Next week I hope to be in a position to make some remarks about it.

THERE must be a number of old gentlemen about the country who have assisted to ring in the New Year on a peal of church bells for a great many years. With a view to ascertaining who has taken part in this time-honoured ceremony the greatest number of times, I offer One Guinea to the person who can prove himself to have done so oftenest. Applications must arrive at these offices by Wednesday, January 10th, the envelopes containing them marked "Bellringer." Each application should be verified, so far as is possible, by the minister of the church at which the applicant is a bellringer.

MANY, many thanks to the numerous readers who have been so good as to send me Christmas cards and Christmas greetings. The former have been added to the—I am proud to say—large album containing similar kindly tokens received in former years, and the latter will live at least as long in the heart of their recipient as the cards will between the covers of the album.

It is commonly supposed that men are a cut above fashions. This is the greatest mistake in the world. Some paper stated the other day that the fashion of wearing gloves in the evening is fast dying out. Dozens of young men have written to get my advice on this burning subject, as if I were some fashionable hosiery. Who in the world cares whether a young man wears gloves or not, so long as his hands are clean.

ONE signing himself G. R. consults me on a very delicate point. In walking with a lady on the sea-front, should one take the side next the road or next the sea?

—This is a very difficult problem. You see, if you take the side next the road you are liable to get splashed with mud. On the other hand, if you resign this privilege in favour of the lady, you run a chance of getting pushed over into the sea, or, anyway, down on the beach. Personally, of these gruesome alternatives, I prefer the mud. After all, it will brush off. And the advantage of not getting pushed into the sea is that, supposing the lady is pushed over the edge, it gives one an opportunity of earning a medal from the Humane Society—which pawns very well, I am told—and saving the lady into the bargain.

B. N.—The first balloon ascent, or rather I ought to say the first on record, was made by the brothers Montgolfier in a fire balloon, at Annonay, in 1783. One month afterwards some aerial navigators ascended from Paris in a balloon inflated with hydrogen. The principles of aero-navigation had been scientifically discussed long before this, and it is supposed that as early as the fourteenth century people interested knew quite enough about the matter to have enabled them to make a successful ascent. Apparently no one was willing to risk his neck in those days. Men were not so careless of their lives as they are to-day, when any action more foolhardy than the ordinary will bring a cheap notoriety and make a man a hero.

My little article on the reason for the popularity of golf hasn't been received altogether with favour. The defining of it as "the mug's game" has roused a burning indignation in the bosoms of many ardent golfers, who have written demanding hotly that this obnoxious expression should be withdrawn. Perhaps it wasn't a very polite thing to say, so I cheerfully substitute the, I hope, less objectionable phrase, "the duffer's game." To this I am going to stick. I wish that some of my correspondents had read the article rather more carefully before writing about it, as they have written quite under a misapprehension. I carefully explained that I did not mean for one moment to insinuate that the game was one only played by mu—pardon, I mean duffers; but merely that of all outdoor games, it gives the duffer the best show. Mind you, I have scarcely passed beyond the duffer-stage myself—indeed I fear that I shall not play the game enough to do so, until I am a good many years older—so I know what I am talking about. Many of my lecturers hint pretty broadly that the article was written under a sort of "sour grapes" influence, but that isn't so, for I can say, without boasting, that I play golf better than most people who have had my opportunities of learning the game. The joys of a long drive, or a successful putt from the edge of the green are not unknown to me. No, the article was just an attempt to determine the causes of the marvellous popularity of golf. Whether it did this successfully or not is not for me to say.

BOMBARDIER.—You're not going to be disappointed in your hope that THE SYREN OF THE SKIES will be as interesting as THE ANGEL OF THE REVOLUTION. With the exception of the author I am the only person who knows both stories, and I have no hesitation in saying that the one which has just begun is a good deal more interesting than THE ANGEL was, though I know that is saying a good deal.

OCEAN WAVE is anxious to know in what part of a liner the specie-room is situated.—The knowledge of the fact that, whatever your designs may be, the specie-room on most steam-ships is quite burglar proof, allows me to tell you with a free conscience that it is, as a rule, situated amidships, under the saloon. In the *Campania*, for instance, it is right under the chair the captain occupies. It is usually sixteen feet long by ten wide and eight high; but of course the dimensions vary with the size of the ship. It is built of quarter-inch steel plates, riveted together, and the door is provided with a combination lock. The gold and silver is originally shipped in bars, and some of the big Atlantic liners are entrusted with from £700,000 to £1,000,000 worth of specie on a single voyage.

G. W. and his wife are at loggerheads. They have never been able to agree upon the point whether children should be permitted to read fairy tales or not, and the question is becoming more important daily in view of the fact that their three children are arriving at an age when some sort of literature must be chosen for them. Both my correspondent and his wife are willing to abide by what I have to say on the matter.

—Well, I think that children should be allowed to read fairy tales. The brain of the modern child is far too prosaic at an age when its owner should be still sitting on a high chair at meals. In my belief the greater the liking for fairy stories a child evinces, the more childlike, and consequently the more charming will it be. Yet it is a melancholy fact that many a youngster, after reading a tale from the Arabian Nights or Grimm, turns to its parent with an air of disgust and says, "Yes, but that's all nonsense, that couldn't possibly happen." As a rule the cause of this sort of thing is that the child has not been allowed to read fairy tales when its mind was young enough to be really receptive.

T. R.—A player at whist can hold about six hundred and thirty-five thousand million different hands. The chances against holding seven trumps are one hundred and sixty to one—and not worth betting on.

LIEUTENANT CORR.—The average age to which dogs live is about fifteen years. Supposing, for the sake of argument, that your puppy does as well as this he will cost you, besides his licence at 7s. 6d. a year, about two-pence a day for food, and goodness only knows how much more for veterinary attendance, collars, chains, kennels, and muzzles. By the time you are through with him the very least he can have cost you is £50, and if he turns out to be a sportsman with a proclivity for chickens it may be double that sum. No doubt you will be glad to hear that some dogs live to nearly thirty—and they cost a good deal more as they get older, and are continually wanting stewed beef and embrocation.

DOUBTER.—The Salvation Army hold on an aggregate 13,000,000 religious meetings every year. As to Mr. Booth's publications, it appears that the Army has thirty-three weekly newspapers, with a combined circulation of over 40,000,000 copies, and fifteen monthly magazines, of which 3,000,000 are sold. Its total annual income from every source exceeds £800,000.

H. B. says: Steel pens are cheap nowadays, goodness knows, but one gets attached to a nib that has done much service in the way of writing, and I would like you to tell me some way of cleaning a pen that has become clogged with ink. I have tried boiling it, but that spoils the pen altogether.—A potato is a very good thing, I believe, if you are not too proud to have a humble tuber on your writing-table. When you have finished scribbling stick the nib into it. Not only will it become quite free from corrosion, but the ink will flow from it much more freely.

S. B. asks which is the fleetest animal?—From personal observation I should say the man who owes you a fiver when he catches sight of you coming round the corner. Barring him, the ostrich is the swiftest runner on the face of the earth. The pace at which a strong bird can run has been estimated at sixty miles an hour. Their legs go so fast that they do not appear to touch the ground.

E. T. R.—My good friend, does it not strike you that if it were possible to distinguish the sex of eggs they would be distinguished? The secret has never been discovered yet. If it had been, think you, is it likely that breeders would produce more cockerels than they want, or that farmers who wished to increase their stock of hens, would buy settings to find that when the eggs were hatched three-fourths of the brood were of the male persuasion. Your question reminds me of the Englishman who once, in a fit of despair, asked a croupier at Monte Carlo, if there really was any system which could be depended on. "If so, I'd think I'd sit here for fifteen pounds a month," was the scornful reply.

H. C. AND MANY OTHERS.—Thank you very much. I'm a great deal better. A particularly severe attack of influenza did the mischief.

REFERRING to the recent letter about watering streets by means of perforated pipes laid along them, A. F. T. writes to say that this system is in use at Bishop's Stortford, where it answers remarkably well.

F. R.—I am weary of girding at the evils of the tipping system. It has got to such a pitch that in a fit of absent-mindedness I gave a man in a big London emporium something the other day after I had made a purchase. I didn't realise what I had done until he returned the coin with a vacant stare. It was a stupid mistake to make, and I apologised for the insult, but having come up in a train with a bag and tipped the porter, taken a cab and tipped the driver, had my hair cut and tipped the cutter, eaten some lunch and bestowed a gratuity on the waiter, it was perhaps excusable.

O. F.—The Foss Dyke is the oldest canal navigable in this country. It was one of many constructed by the Romans, before whose coming no artificial waterways were made. The Caer Dyke, which you mention, extended from Peterborough to Lincoln, a distance of nearly forty miles. It exists now only in name.

G. P.—Thanks for kind inquiries. The fighting Editor is all right. We don't say much about him, for if we do he gets proud, and wants to leave P. W. and accept one of the many dazzling offers that are always being made him by music-hall managers who wish to secure him for their shows. He has had rather a dull time lately. The golf article pleased him, and he practised assiduously with Indian clubs for a few days after its appearance, and got me to bring him up a golf club, so that he could judge of its effectiveness as an offensive weapon and devise the best means of opposing it. But nothing much transpired, if you except a couple of Scotsmen who were to be seen travelling down Henrietta Street one afternoon a great deal faster than any golf ball they ever hit from a tee. The great man hears with pleasure that the big stump of petrified wood is on its way from Chicago, as he anticipates a little fun in keeping order among the crowds who will flock to see it.

A GREAT many people wear gold earrings in the belief that they act as a cure for weak eyes. COMUS asks me whether this is anything more than vulgar superstition, and I am bound to say there are small grounds for believing in the remedy. The truth of the matter is that by piercing the ears a counter irritation is set up, which may effect more or less of a cure. The use of the gold rings is to keep the wound open as long as possible, and hence the magical power with which they have been credited, especially by seafaring men. When once the skin has grown over the wound, the rings in the ears are as useless as rings on the toes would be.

ANENT the paragraph which spoke of tiny parishes. C. G. writes to point out the fact that in the parish of Ludlow Castle there is only one house, which is occupied by the overseer.

G. T. D. writes to ask why guessing competitions are allowed in Guildford. He says that at the cattle show recently held there prizes were offered to the persons who most nearly guessed the weight of a fat beast. An entrance-fee of a shilling was charged, and G. T. D. doesn't think it ought to be allowed.—Personally, I should be disposed to call this a contest of skill and judgment. I know that if I entered for it my estimate of the beast's weight would be wildly wide of the mark; whereas I have often seen a farmer judge the weight of a pig or a flock within a few pounds. At the same time, I shouldn't be the least surprised to see such contests pronounced illegal by the same sapient authorities who pronounced it a matter of impossibility to exercise any skill in forecasting the weather.

The limited space in this page permits of only a very small fraction of the letters addressed to this office every week being answered in print, but any reader who encloses a stamped, addressed envelope with his enquiry, will receive a reply through the post.

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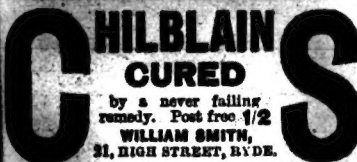
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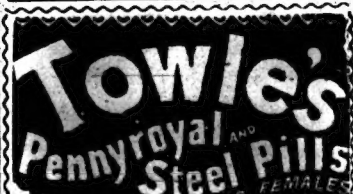


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A SEQUEL.

Daisy! Daisy! give me your answer, do.
I'm so mazy, I really must take a few.

The pills we bought after marriage,
And we packed quite safe on our carriage,
I can't see them here, so wake up, my dear,
And find me those Beechams, do.